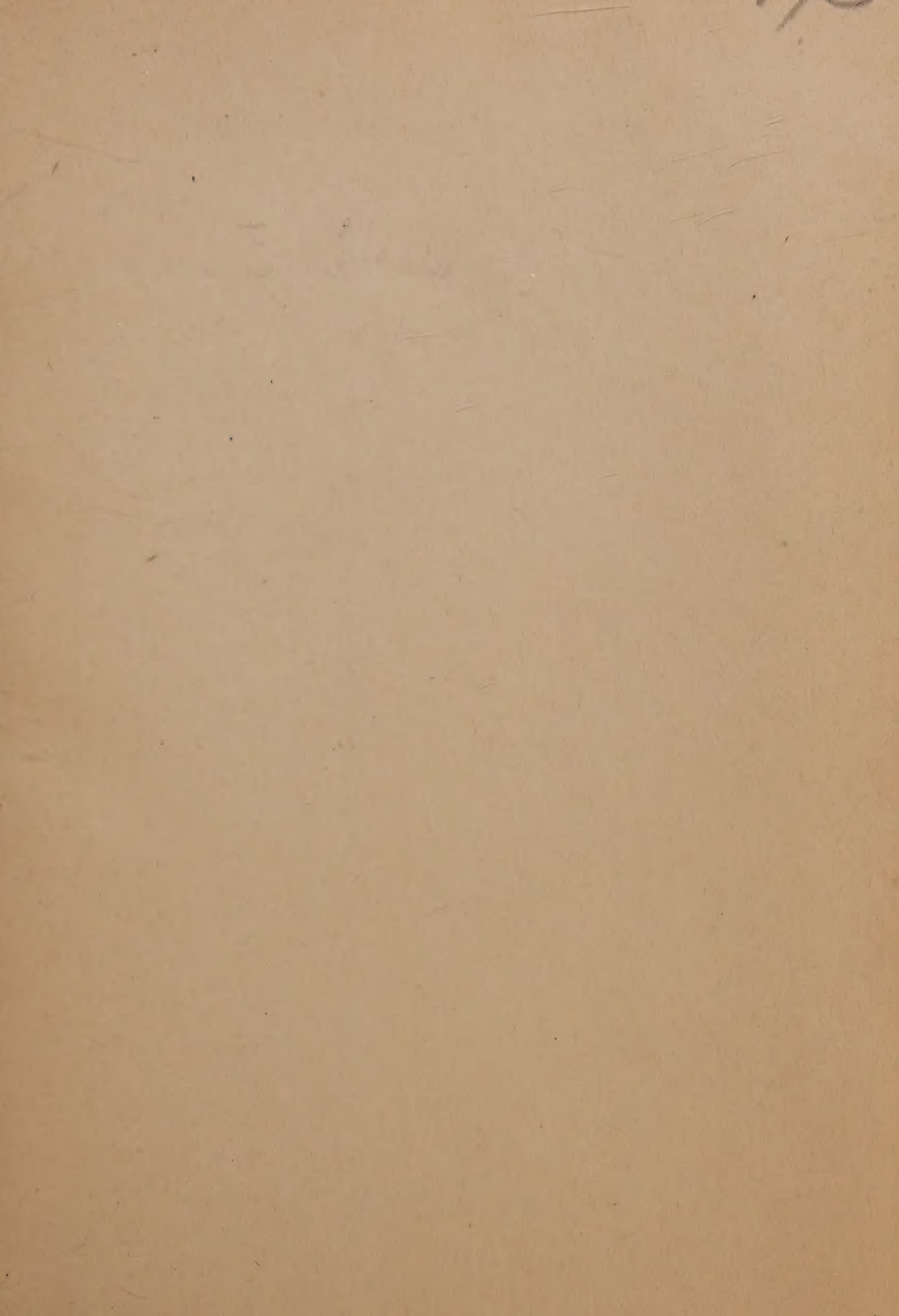


UNCLE WIGGILY ON SUGAR ISLAND



HOWARD R. GARIS





"Oh! Oh!"
exclaimed
Baby Bunty.

UNCLE WIGGILY ON SUGAR ISLAND

or

What Happened to Sammie Littletail

BY

HOWARD R. GARIS

AUTHOR OF "UNCLE WIGGILY BEDTIME STORIES," "UNCLE
WIGGILY'S PICTURE BOOK," "UNCLE WIGGILY'S STORY
BOOK," "THE DADDY BOOKS," ETC.

Illustrated by

LANSING CAMPBELL

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UNCLE WIGGILY BOOKS

BY
HOWARD R. GARIS

BEDTIME STORIES

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UNCLE WIGGILY ON SUGAR ISLAND

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NOTE

This book is quite different from any of the other Uncle Wiggily volumes. Instead of separate stories it consists of a one, complete narrative adventure, concerning the activities of the rabbit gentleman and his friends while camping on an island.

None of the material contained in this book has ever before appeared in print.

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Uncle Wiggily on Sugar Island

CHAPTER I

SAMMIE LITTLETAIL IS LOST

DOWN from his home nest in the hollow tree scampered Johnnie Bushytail, the squirrel boy. He was so excited that he dropped a hickory nut he had only half eaten.

"Hello, Sammie!" he called to a little rabbit chap who was hopping along beneath the tree. "Hi there, Sammie! Wait a minute!" chattered Johnnie.

"What for shall I wait?" asked Sammie, who seemed to be in a great hurry. "Oh, did you want me to pick up that nut for you?" went on Sammie politely, as he took up, in his paw, the nut Johnnie had dropped.

"No, I didn't call you for that, though I thank you just the same," said the boy squirrel. "But have you heard the news?"

"What news?"

"About Uncle Wiggily."

"Oh, nothing has happened him; has there?" gasped Sammie and his little pink nose almost stopped twinkling. "Did the Bob Cat get Uncle Wiggily, or has the Woozie Wolf nibbled his ears?"

"No, nothing like that," chattered Johnnie, flicking his big bushy tail about in the air over his head. Sammie looked at Johnnie's wonderful tail, and the rabbit boy wished he had one like it. But Sammie's tail was very small, and always would be, so there was no use in wishing it were larger.

"Well, what's the news about Uncle Wiggily?" asked Sammie, for Johnnie was looking in the nut shell to see if he had nibbled out the last crumb of the sweet, juicy meat.

"Oh, it's just wonderful!" answered the little squirrel boy. "He just told us, and Billie and I are going. I hope you can go, too."

"Go where?" asked Sammie, rather puzzled.

"Off to Sugar Island," was the answer. "Listen! Uncle Wiggily is going to camp on Sugar Island and he's going to take a lot of us animal

boys and girls with him. Hurray! Won't that be fun?"

"Hurray! It surely will!" laughed Sammie. "But when is he going and how? And do you think he will take me?"

"He's going in his motor boat very soon," went on Johnnie. "He just stopped at our tree house and asked my mother if Billie and I might go. I guess he'll stop at your house and ask if you and your sister Susie may go. But I happened to see you hopping along so I scrambled down to tell you about it."

"I'm glad you did—thank you," spoke Sammie. "And I guess I'll run home now and see if Uncle Wiggily has been there. I wouldn't want to miss a trip like that!"

"I should say not!" chattered Johnnie. "Oh, what fun we'll have—you and Susie and Billie and I—Jackie and Peetie Bow Wow and Lulu, Alice and Jimmie Wibblewobble——"

"Are the ducks going, too?" asked Sammie, turning around as he was about to hop home to see if Uncle Wiggily had been there.

"Yes, they're going," answered Johnnie. "But I guess if there isn't room in Uncle Wig-

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gily's motor boat Jimmie and his sisters can paddle to Sugar Island by themselves."

"Yes, I guess they can!" chuckled Sammie. "But I wonder why it is called Sugar Island?"

"Because it has maple sugar trees on it," answered Johnnie, and then he scampered up the tree, for he heard his brother Billie calling him. "I'll see you on Sugar Island, Sammie," chattered the squirrel boy to the rabbit.

"Yes, I'll meet you on Sugar Island," agreed Sammie. Then away he scampered over the fields and through the woods toward the burrow, or underground house, where he lived with his sister Susie, his father and his mother and Baby Bunty. She was very cute, was Baby Bunty, but she was always getting into mischief or playing some trick on Uncle Wiggily. Baby Bunty was a little orphan rabbit, and she took turns living around the forest in the homes of the different, kindly animal folk. Sometimes she lived with Uncle Wiggily and Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy, the rabbit gentleman's muskrat lady housekeeper; and another time she would visit Mr. and Mrs. Bow Wow, the dog gentleman and his wife.

"Mother! Mother!" cried Sammie, sliding down into the burrow, all out of breath and much excited. "Has Uncle Wiggily been here? Did he ask if I could go camping on Sugar Island with him? And may Susie and I go—please say yes, Mother dear!"

"Why, yes, Sammie," answered Mrs. Littletail with a smile. "Uncle Wiggily has been here and you and Susie are to go to Sugar Island with him. You must hurry now, and wash your paws and face, and be sure to get your ears clean. Susie is all ready long ago. Uncle Wiggily and Nurse Jane are going to stop here for you in a little while."

"Oh, hurray! Hurrah! Hurroo!" cried Sammie, cheering three different ways and jumping up and down because he was so glad and happy! "What fun we'll have on Sugar Island, camping with Uncle Wiggily!"

"Come! Hurry! Wash your paws and face and don't forget your ears!" called his mother, smiling at her little rabbit boy. Then she turned to see about Susie who was also getting ready for the wonderful trip, so, for a time, Mrs. Littletail forgot about Sammie. But a great deal

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was happening to that little rabbit chap—as you shall hear.

It wasn't long, after Sammie had reached home, having learned about the Sugar Island trip from the squirrel boy, before the honking of an automobile horn was heard out in front of the burrow house. And in the auto was Uncle Wiggily, the dear old rabbit gentleman himself.

"Are Sammie and Susie ready, Mrs. Littletail?" he asked, twinkling his pink nose like a star on top of a Christmas tree.

"Yes, I'm all ready," answered Susie, hopping around in her clean calico dress.

"Where is Sammie?" asked the mother rabbit. "I sent him to wash and get ready. Where is he?"

"I'll call him," kindly offered Susie. So she called: "Sammie! Sammie! Hurry! Here's Uncle Wiggily in his auto and he's going to take us down to the motor boat dock and we're going to Sugar Island! Where are you, Sammie?"

But Sammie did not answer. Nor did he reply when Uncle Wiggily called. Then Mrs. Littletail took up the cry:

"Sammie! Sammie! Hurry!"

But no Sammie came.

Then Baby Bunty, who was also going to Sugar Island, hopped up the hill at the foot of which ran the bubbling brook.

"Oh! Oh!" exclaimed Baby Bunty. "I—now—I guess Sammie is lost!"

"Lost!" cried Uncle Wiggily. "What do you mean, Baby Bunty?"

"Well," said the little rabbit girl, "I was just down to the brook, getting a drink of fresh water before I went to Sugar Island. And I saw Sammie's clothes in a heap on the shore, but Sammie isn't there. I guess Sammie is lost! Oh, dear! Boo hoo!" and Baby Bunty began to cry, for she loved Sammie very much.

"Sammie lost! Oh, dear! I hope that hasn't happened!" said Uncle Wiggily jumping out of his automobile. "We must find him!"

.

CHAPTER II

OFF TO SUGAR ISLAND

UNCLE WIGGILY Longears was a wise old rabbit gentleman. For many years he had lived in the woods, sometimes in the underground burrow house with the Littletail family, but of late in a hollow stump bungalow with Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy. So Uncle Wiggily knew a great deal about the forest and fields, and how to find lost animal boys and girls. For this was not the first time Sammie had wandered away and could not be found.

"But I thought he would stay around home, especially when he knew you were coming to take him to Sugar Island," said Sammie's mother as she and Susie, with Baby Bunty and Mr. Longears hopped down toward the brook. Mr. Littletail, who was Sammie's father, would have joined in the search, but that rabbit gentleman was off in the fields, gathering clover for the family dinner that day.

"I think I know what happened, Mother," said Susie.

"What do you think happened, my dear?" asked Mrs. Littletail, who was beginning to get anxious.

"I think Sammie went down to the brook to wash himself, so he would be nice and clean to go to Sugar Island," explained Sammie's sister. "You know you told him to wash his paws and face and inside his ears."

"Yes, I told him that," said Mrs. Littletail.

"Well," went on Susie, "I guess he didn't want to splash a lot of water around the bath room when he washed his ears, so he went down to the brook to swim and get washed that way."

"Yes, I saw his clothes on the edge of the brook," said Baby Bunty. "He must have gone in swimming."

"Sammie is a great splasher," spoke his mother with a sigh. "Often I have told him not to splatter so much water around the room. So it is very likely that he did go in swimming. But why wouldn't he hurry out again, put his clothes on and come back to wait for you, Uncle Wig-gily? Why wouldn't he do that?" asked Sam-

mie's mother as they hurried on to the brook.

"Perhaps he couldn't," said Susie, in a low voice.

"What do you mean?" asked Baby Bunty.

"Maybe—maybe the Fox or Wolf caught Sammie when he was in swimmnig, or when he came up out of the water," went on Susie in a low voice. "Maybe the Bob Cat carried Sammie off!"

"Hush! Don't let your mother hear you say that!" quickly spoke Baby Bunty. "Don't say such a thing—she is worried enough now. And I guess Uncle Wiggily will soon find Sammie." In some ways Baby Bunty was very wise, though she did love to play tricks and was full of mischief.

Susie squeezed back the tears that were almost ready to fall as she thought of what might have happened to her rabbit brother, and, taking Baby Bunty's paw, she hopped on with her behind Uncle Wiggily and Mrs. Littletail.

"There are Sammie's clothes!" exclaimed Baby Bunty, pointing to a neat pile of little rabbit garments on the edge of the brook.

"So they are!" spoke Mrs. Littletail, for well

she knew that little jacket and small trousers—many a hole she had mended in them where Sammie had torn them playing tag through the bramble bushes.

“And this is the swimming hole where the animal boys go in,” said Uncle Wiggily. “Yes, Sammie must have come here to wash himself, to get ready to go to Sugar Island with me.”

“But where is Sammie now?” asked Mrs. Litletail, peering about amid the trees and bushes.

“Do you think—now—do you think he’s drowned?” asked Susie, sort of shivery like.

“Drowned? Nonsense! Not a bit of it!” cried jolly Uncle Wiggily, twinkling his pink nose very fast. “I think Sammie felt so very fine, after he had his clothes off, and had been in for a swim—he felt so lively that he ran off through the woods. He didn’t think I would be after him so soon, and he has gone for a little run by himself. He’ll be back shortly.

“But as I can’t wait, you tell him I’ll come over some other time, after I take the rest of the boys and girls to Sugar Island, and get him. I’ll go along now, with Susie, Baby Bunty and all the animal children who are going with me,

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and I'll come back for Sammie later. He's all right, Mrs. Littletail—don't worry!"

"Do you think so?" asked the rabbit lady. "Are you sure he'll come back? Maybe he is drowned?"

"Nonsense!" laughed jolly Uncle Wiggily again. "Sammie is all right—he knows how to swim, though of course a rabbit isn't as good a swimmer as a fish or a frog. And, speaking of frogs—I'll just call Bully and Bawly No-Tail and ask them if they have seen Sammie."

Uncle Wiggily stood on the edge of the brook and called:

"Ker-ump! Ker-ump! Ker-ump! Ho, Bully! Ho, Bawly! Where are you?"

Up out of the brook popped two frog boys in their waterproof suits.

"Have you seen Sammie Littletail?" asked Uncle Wiggily. "We found his clothes here on the shore, but we can't find Sammie."

"And I'm afraid he is — drowned!" sighed Mrs. Littletail.

"No, he isn't!" croaked Bully the fat, green frog boy. "Bawly and I saw Sammie come down here, take off his clothes and go in swim-

ming. He told us he was cleaning himself so he could go to Sugar Island."

"And we're going, too," croaked Bawly. "But we're going to swim over with the Wibble-wobble ducks."

"Yes, I have invited you and the Wibble-wobbles," remarked Uncle Wiggily. "But tell us about Sammie, please."

"Well, after we talked a while about the fun we would have on Sugar Island," said Bully, "Sammie splashed around in the water, and put a lot in his ears, 'cause his mother said to be sure and do that. And then we saw Sammie jump out on shore and run around to get dry; didn't we, Bawly?"

"That's what we did," croaked the other frog boy. "And then Bully and I had to go to the pond store for our mother to get some water-cress for lunch, and we didn't see Sammie any more. He was jumping about on shore when we left."

"There! I told you he was all right!" said Uncle Wiggily to Mrs. Littletail. "He has just gone for a run in the woods."

"Well, I hope he runs back again, soon,"

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sighed the mother rabbit. "It's too bad he isn't here to go to Sugar Island with the others."

"Oh, I am going to make a number of trips to the island in my motor boat," said the rabbit gentleman. "I couldn't take all the boys and girls who want to go there in one trip. And when I return, in a day or so, I'll come and get Sammie."

"He will be a little disappointed," remarked Mrs. Littletail, "but it serves him right for running away to play tag, or something like that, when he should have dressed after his swim and waited for you. Yes, he will be much disappointed."

"I will sit here for a while, near Sammie's clothes," said his mother, "and wait for him to come back and get them. Then I will tell him Uncle Wiggily couldn't wait for such a foolish little rabbit." So Mrs. Littletail made herself comfortable on a flat stump for a seat, near Sammie's jacket and trousers.

However there was no help for it. Already it was past the time when Uncle Wiggily should have left for Sugar Island. So, putting Susie and Baby Bunty in the car, he hurried off

through the forest to the motor boat dock, where many other animal children were waiting to go on the jolly vacation excursion.

"All aboard!" called Nurse Jane Fuzzy, who who was going to Sugar Island with Uncle Wiggily to help look after the little ones. "All aboard!" The muskrat lady housekeeper stood in the middle of the motor boat, which was made from an old wash tub, with plush seats.

"Is everyone here?" asked Uncle Wiggily. "That is all but Sammie Littletail?"

"All here?" answered Nurse Jane. "That is all who are going on this trip."

"Then off we go to Sugar Island!" cried the rabbit gentleman, and away they started across Green Lake, in the middle of which was the island where they were to camp.

I know you are all wondering what happened to Sammie, so we must go back a bit and find out.

CHAPTER III

HOW SAMMIE WAS CAUGHT

WHEN Sammie Littletail hopped down to the edge of the brook to swim he was thinking of many things. One was that he wanted to take a swim in the clear, cool water.

"Then I won't splash the bath room in our burrow house so much," said Sammie to himself. "And it's much easier to wash such big ears as mine by sozzling them around in the water, than it is to take a wet rag and wiggle it around inside."

After that Sammie thought what jolly fun he would have when he went camping on Sugar Island with Uncle Wiggily.

"Jackie and Peetie Bow Wow will be there," laughed Sammie, "and we'll make a fire and roast potatoes and carrots and we'll splash in the water and go fishing and all things like that! Oh, what fun we'll have!"

Sammie was so excited that he hardly stopped to unbutton his jacket—indeed he pulled it so hard that he tore off one button and it rolled around on the ground like a top.

“Anyhow I’m not going to wear these clothes when I go with Uncle Wiggily,” said Sammie to himself, “so a button or two off will not matter. But I’ll pick that one up and save it so mother can sew it on when I’m gone.”

The rabbit boy piled his garments neatly on the bank of the brook, upon a dry stone, and far enough up from the shore so they would not be splattered when he jumped in to swim. Then Sammie gave a few wiggles, for the wind tickled his fur and next, with a jolly cry, into the water he leaped. Uncle Wiggily had taught Sammie and Susie how to swim some time before this. And while, of course, Sammie wasn’t as good at it as Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy the muskrat lady housekeeper, nor as clever as Toodle and Noodle Flat Tail, the beavers, still, for a rabbit boy, Sammie did very well.

He had not been splashing long in the water before he saw a funny nose and mouth, followed by two bulging eyes, poked up out of the brook

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beside the broad, floating green leaf of a pond lily.

"Hullo, Bully No-Tail!" called Sammie to the frog boy.

"Hello, Sammie!" croaked Bully.

Then up popped two more bulging eyes and Bawly, who was Bully's brother, climbed out on a floating leaf and sat there.

"What you doing, Sammie?" asked Bawly.

"I'm taking a swim so I'll be clean to go to Sugar Island with Uncle Wiggily," answered Sammie.

"Oh, are you going?" cried Bully.

"Of course I am," answered Sammie. "Are you?"

Bully and Bawly were, as it happened, and then the three animal boys played around in the water, talking about the fun they were going to have.

"I'm going in Uncle Wiggily's motor boat," said Sammie, as he climbed out on shore, for he thought, by this time, his ears were clean.

"Bawly and I are going to swim," croaked Bully. "We can swim to Sugar Island and back again."

"I can't swim that far," admitted Sammie. "You frogs are good swimmers. I'll have to go in the boat with my sister Susie. And I guess Johnnie and Billie Bushytail, the squirrels, are going in the boat, too."

"Yes, they can't swim very well," remarked Bully. And then he lifted up his head, listened a moment and answered: "Yes, Mother, we'll come right away! We've got to go to the store for our mother," Bully explained to Sammie. "She just called us. We'll see you later—on Sugar Island!"

Away swam the frog boys, racing through the water as they often did, while Sammie danced about on shore, near his pile of clothes, to get dry so he could dress.

Now if a small boy and girl had not happened, just then, to come down to the brook, what next occurred to Sammie Littletail might never have taken place. But the boy and girl came and, what is more, they saw Sammie dancing about without any clothes on—just as you see most rabbits.

"Oh, look, Neil!" exclaimed the little girl. "A rabbit! A live bunny!"

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"So it is, Joan!" shouted the boy. "I'm going to see if I can get it. I've always wanted a rabbit for a pet!"

"I have, too," said the little girl who had golden, curling hair and blue eyes, while her brother's hair was brown, and so were his eyes. "Do you think you can get him, Neil?"

"I guess so," whispered the boy. "You stay here and don't make any noise. His back is this way and he doesn't see me. Maybe I can get close enough to grab him."

"Don't hurt him," whispered Joan. "He's such a cute, little bunny!"

"I won't hurt him—not a bit!" promised the boy.

While his sister sat down very quietly on a flat stump, Neil began creeping silently toward Sammie Littletail. Nearer and nearer crept the boy on his hands and knees, crouching down behind the weeds and bushes.

Now if Sammie had not been thinking so much about dancing around in the warm, sunny air to dry his fur, and if he had not been day-dreaming so much about the fun he was going

to have on Sugar Island, perhaps he might have heard Neil Chadwick—which was the boy's name—creeping toward him.

But Sammie was sort of singing to himself:

“La! La! La! Oh what jolly fun! As soon as I am dry I'll put on my clothes and run! run! run!”

Sammie skipped here and there on the shore of the brook. His paws made little shuffling sounds on some dried leaves that were scattered on the ground. Perhaps it was these sounds which prevented Sammie hearing the little noises Neil made as he crept closer and closer.

Sammie's back was still toward the boy. The little rabbit chap leaned down to pick up a stone to toss into the brook. And just then Neil was close enough to reach out his hands, from behind a sheltering bush, and catch Sammie.

“I've got him! Oh, Joan, I've got him!” shouted Neil, leaping up with the struggling rabbit boy in his grasp.

“Oh, have you! That's nice!” said Joan, running toward her brother. “But don't hurt him!”

“I won't,” promised Neil. “I'll take him

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home and put him in a cage, and we'll take him to Sugar Island with us when we go camping. Hurray! I've caught a rabbit!"

Poor Sammie Littletail was, indeed, caught. But with all his might he struggled to get away. My! How he kicked, squirmed and wiggled.

"Look out! He's getting loose!" cried Joan.

"Yes! Come and help me hold him!" begged her brother.

CHAPTER IV

THE WOODEN CAGE

JOAN and Neil, the boy and girl who had caught Sammie as he came out of the swimming brook, held tightly to the little rabbit boy. Joan grasped his ears and Neil had hold of the kicking legs.

"Don't hurt him!" said Joan again.

"No, we mustn't hurt him," agreed her brother. "But, now I have caught him I don't intend to let him get away!"

Poor Sammie felt that he was tightly held.

"Oh, let me go! Let me go!" he begged, his heart beating very fast. But as he spoke rabbit talk, which neither Neil nor Joan understood, they did not know what Sammie was saying. As it happened, however, Sammie could hear and understand what the children said. Uncle Wiggily had taught him to know the language of boys and girls.

"I know you mean to be kind," said Sammie in his own language, "and you don't want to

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hurt me. But please let me go! I want to put on my clothes and run back to my burrow home. If I don't I may be too late to go with Uncle Wiggily to Sugar Island!"

Neither Neil nor Joan understood this. All they knew was that they had caught a cute little rabbit and wanted to keep him for a pet. After a while Sammie stopped kicking and squirming and lay quietly in Neil's arms.

"He's all right now," said the boy to his sister. "He knows we aren't going to hurt him and he will like to live in the cage I am going to make for him."

"But feel how fast his heart beats," spoke Joan, a little sadly. "Oh, Neil, maybe we'd better let him go!"

Sammie's heart, indeed, was beating very fast, for he had kicked and squirmed with all his might to get loose. His heart felt as if it might burst, just as yours does if you run far and swiftly. And when Sammie heard Joan tell her brother to let the little rabbit go, then Sammie's heart beat more quickly than ever—but this time with hope—not fear.

"Oh, if they would only let me go!" thought

the little animal. "I don't want to be put in a cage! I want to run around in the woods and jump over the daisies in the fields. I want to play with Susie and with Jackie and Peetie Bow Wow! I want to go to Sugar Island with Uncle Wiggily! Please! Please let me go!"

But Neil shook his head.

"No," he told Joan, "I am going to keep this rabbit for a pet. I will make a nice cage for him and teach him to do tricks!"

"But I don't want to be put in a cage! I don't want to learn any tricks!" cried Sammie.

But his words were neither heard nor understood by the boy and girl. They did not have the proper ears for listening to animal talk.

"I wonder if this rabbit lives around here?" asked Joan of her brother as they started back toward their own house, that was on the edge of the forest in which Uncle Wiggily had his hollow stump bungalow.

"Yes, I guess he does," Neil answered. "Rabbits don't go very far from their burrows. Maybe if I looked I could find where this one came from, and I could get another bunny for you, Joan."

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"No," answered the little girl, slowly. "Thank you, but I don't believe I want a rabbit. Yours is enough. It makes me feel sorry for this one—his heart beat so fast—as if he were afraid."

"Well, he needn't be afraid," spoke Neil with a laugh. "I'm not going to hurt him. I'll take good care of him and give him all the cabbage and carrots he can eat! He'll be much better off in the cage I'll make than he would be in the forest."

"Maybe," said Joan.

"No, there isn't any 'maybe' about it!" said Sammie, though of course the boy and girl couldn't understand. "I will be much happier if you let me go. Can't you see I am not an ordinary rabbit? I am one of Uncle Wiggily's friends!"

Of course if Joan and Neil had seen the little pile of clothes that Sammie had taken off to go in swimming, they would have known, at once, he was different from any other rabbit they had ever met. But Neil had caught Sammie some distance away from the neatly folded jacket and trousers, so the boy did not see them.

Through the woods hurried Neil, carrying Sammie in his arms, and behind her brother walked Joan, the little girl. She saw that the bunny now lay more quietly in her brother's arms, and she said:

"Maybe he will get used to living in a cage and like it. I guess he will get tame."

"I am tame now," said Sammie, speaking his own kind of talk, "but I will never get used to living in a cage, no matter how long you keep me. And I am going to do my best to get away! I'll dig my way out! I'll make a tunnel underground and escape! You can't keep me in a cage!"

But alas for Sammie's hopes!

Neil carried the little bunny up to the house and called his mother, telling her where he had caught Sammie.

"You didn't hurt him, I hope," said Mrs. Chadwick.

"Oh, no, not a bit!" exclaimed Neil. "But Joan and I had to hold him tight, for he wiggled like everything! Where's a box that I can put him in until we get to Sugar Island?"

"I'll find you one," said Mrs. Chadwick.

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"He is a cute little bunny—and see how prettily his pink nose twinkles!"

But just then Sammie was thinking of something else than his twinkling nose. He had heard the words: "Sugar Island!"

"I wonder if it is the same island where Uncle Wiggily is going?" thought Sammie. "If it is, and this boy and girl take me there, maybe Uncle Wiggily will help me get away from them. Oh, I wonder if it's the same Sugar Island?"

Sammie did not have to wonder very long. For while Mrs. Chadwick was bringing the wooden box so Neil could make a cage for Sammie, Joan was singing happily:

"Oh, we're going to Sugar Island! To Sugar Island in Green Lake! And there we'll have some jolly fun—and there my dolls I'll take!"

"Yes—it's the same island," thought Sammie to himself. "The one in Green Lake—that's where Uncle Wiggily is going to camp! And when he knows I am there he'll help me! Oh, dear! But I wish I hadn't been caught!"

However poor Sammie was caught and, a little later he was shut tightly up in a small

wooden box, with some strong wire netting tacked in front. Through this netting Neil put some bits of carrot and some cabbage leaves.

"There. Now you're safe in my cage!" cried Neil. "Eat and grow fat, little rabbit, and I'll teach you some tricks!"

But Sammie did not want to eat. He did not want to grow fat! He wanted, most of all, to get out of that wooden cage! But the cage was strong.

What was poor Sammie to do?

CHAPTER V

THE CAMPING PARTY

WHILE Sammie was thus shut up in a wooden cage, by Neil and Joan, though the children did not mean to be unkind—while this was happening to Sammie, his sister Susie was having a fine time. She was in the wash-tub motor boat with Uncle Wiggily, and a number of other animal boys and girls whom the old rabbit gentleman had invited to go with him.

“Oh, I’m so happy!” sang Susie, and then she happened to remember that poor Sammie had been left behind, and she added: “But I would be happier if Sammie were with me.”

“I guess he’ll come along pretty soon,” barked Jackie Bow Wow, one of the puppy dogs. “Sammie has run away before, but he always runs back again.”

“Well, I hope he comes to Sugar Island with us,” went on Susie, letting her doll, Sallima-

gundi One Eye Tuesday, dangle her feet in the water.

"How can he get there?" asked Peetie Bow Wow. "Sammie can't swim that far, and it's a good ways to Sugar Island; isn't it, Uncle Wiggily?" asked the other puppy dog boy.

"Yes, Sugar Island is in the middle of Green Lake," answered the old rabbit gentleman who was steering his boat. "Be careful there Charlie Chick!" he called to a little rooster boy who was leaning over the edge. "Don't fall in! You know your feathers are not oily, like those the duck children wear. If you fall in the Lake you will get soaking wet."

"I'll keep hold of him!" cackled Arabella, who was Charlie's little hen sister.

"We don't want any more of our camping party to get lost," went on Uncle Wiggily with a queer little pinkle of his twink nose—Oh, listen to me, would you! I mean a twinkle of his pink nose. "We lost Sammie and we don't want to lose any others."

"We didn't lose Sammie—he lost himself," said Susie. "He ran off in the woods to jump

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around because he was so glad, I guess, and he must be there yet."

"Well, he can't swim to Sugar Island by himself!" barked Peetie.

"Maybe Lulu, Alice and Jimmie Wibblewobble, the ducks, will put Sammie on a raft and pull him over when they swim to the island," suggested Baby Bunty, who was watching her chance to tickle Uncle Wiggily behind his ears.

"Yes, they could do that," said Peetie.

"Or Bully and Bawly, the frogs, could make a boat of lily pad leaves and sail Sammie over in that," crowed Charlie, the rooster.

"Yes, that would be a good way," spoke Susie. "Oh, I do hope my brother comes to Sugar Island," she sighed.

"Don't worry about Sammie," laughed Uncle Wiggily. "He will only be lost for a little while. Probably, by this time, he has put on his clothes and is safe at home with his mother, and he is sorry he couldn't come with us. But I'll go back and get him in a few days—just as soon as I get you boys and girls settled in my camp on Sugar Island."

"I'll look after them while you go for Sammie," offered Nurse Jane.

But, as we know, Sammie had not gone back to put on his clothes, nor had his worried mother found him. For Sammie was shut in the wooden box. I shall tell you more about him in a little while.

So, thinking the little rabbit boy was all right, and feeling that Uncle Wiggily would know just what to do in the matter, the little animal boys and girls in the bunny gentleman's wash-tub motor boat gave themselves over to having a good time.

The sun was shining, the wind was gently blowing, making little ripples and waves on Green Lake and everything was just lovely.

"How long before we shall get to Sugar Island, Uncle Wiggily?" asked Johnnie Bushy-tail, when they had been traveling some time.

"Oh, it's about an hour more," the rabbit gentleman answered. "Are you getting hungry?"

"A little," admitted Johnnie.

"So am I!" cried a number of the others.

"Well, Nurse Jane has brought a lunch

along," said Mr. Longears. "She will feed you pretty soon."

This made the boys and girls feel so happy that they laughed and shouted, and some of the boy chaps whistled. Then Susie Littletail called:

"Oh, let's sing! Everybody sings when they go on a camping party excursion picnic! Let's sing!"

So they sang a song about London Bridge is falling up and another one about The Mulberry Bush Goes Around Us, and The Farmer's in the Well—or maybe it was dell—you couldn't hear very plainly on account of so much noise.

Anyhow they all had a jolly good time and when Nurse Jane opened the lunch boxes and baskets—why there was a better time! Such lettuce and carrot cakes as there were! Such nut sandwiches! What wonderful bone lolly-pops, which Jackie and Peetie Bow Wow liked best of all. And then some strawberryade to drink—pink it was colored, in yellow glasses flavored with pineapples and oranges.

The animal boys and girls were laughing, shouting, singing and eating when, all of a sud-



“Where are you going,
Mr. Turtle?” asked Uncle Wiggily.

den, Charlie the rooster looked over the side of the boat and crowed:

"Oh, look! Here's a shark, I guess!"

"What's a shark?" asked Baby Bunty of Susie.

"A big, hungry fish," was the answer. But when Captain Uncle Wiggily looked over the side he exclaimed:

"That isn't a shark! That's my friend Mr. Mud Turtle!" and so it was, a big mud turtle gentleman swimming along near the wash-tub. He could swim much faster than he could crawl on land.

"Where are you going, Mr. Turtle?" asked Uncle Wiggily.

"I am going to Sugar Island," was the answer.

"Just where we are going!" cried the rabbit gentleman. "Swim along and camp out with us. You didn't see Sammie Littletail anywhere; did you?"

"No, I am sorry to say I did not," croaked the mud turtle when it had been explained to him how Sammie had vanished. "But I dare say he

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will come along soon. He wouldn't want to miss this good time and jolly party."

"I hope he does come," murmured Susie.

Mr. Turtle dived down beneath the water, for he could swim faster that way, and Uncle Wiggily steered the motor boat straight ahead until, in a little while, they had reached Sugar Island.

"All off board! All off board!" cried Nurse Jane, and the animal boys and girls scrambled ashore.

"Where are we going to stay? Where are we going to sleep? Where are we going to eat?" the children cried.

"There are places for all of you," said Uncle Wiggily. "There are hollow trees, hollow stumps, tents made from birch bark, and cosy shelters beneath big toad stools and mushrooms. Soon we shall be nicely settled and living here in camp. Now get in line and follow me!"

But just as the animal boys and girls were doing this, all of a sudden, there was a loud quacking down at the shore.

"What's that?" asked Nurse Jane.

"It's Jimmie Wibblewobble, the duck!" crowed Charlie the rooster.

Up the path came waddling the duck boy.

“Oh, Uncle Wiggily!” quacked Jimmie. “I have just swum over from the main shore with Lulu and Alice my sisters. And I have something to tell you—Oh, something very important! Listen!”

Then they all listened, wondering what it was Jimmie had to say to the rabbit gentleman.

CHAPTER VI

THE PLAYFUL WIND

BEFORE I tell you what Jimmie Wibblewobble, the boy duck said to Uncle Wiggily, I want to relate what happened to Sammie's clothes—his little jacket and trousers—that had been left on the bank of the swimming brook when the boy named Neil caught the bunny.

After Mrs. Littletail, who was Sammie's mother, had sat for a time on a flat stump, looking at the garments of her son, the rabbit lady happened to think that her husband might come home any time now, from the clover field.

"And if he finds me gone, and Susie gone and Baby Bunty gone, he will not know what to think," said Mrs. Littletail, talking aloud to herself, for there was no one else to whom she might speak. "I had better hurry home to greet Mr. Littletail when he returns," thought the rabbit lady. "Though Sammie may get there before I do," she added.

But when she looked at the neat pile of Sammie's clothes, Mrs. Littletail felt sure that her small son would not arrive home ahead of her.

"He wouldn't go there without his jacket and trousers," she said. "He is off in the woods, dancing around in his natural fur suit, because he is so happy about going to Sugar Island. Silly little rabbit! He should have stayed here and not gone off in the forest to leap about and play. For now Uncle Wiggily and the others have left without him.

"However I know Sammie isn't drowned, so I will not worry about him. And pretty soon he will come back, get his clothes and hop home. He will be very much surprised and sad, too, I think, to find that the camping party has gone to the island. But his turn will come later."

So, with a last look at the garments of her small son, Mrs. Littletail hopped back to the burrow or underground house. And she reached it just as Mr. Littletail came hopping from the field with a bundle of sweet clover on his back.

"Well, here I am!" cried Mr. Littletail, twink-

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ling his pink nose in the same funny way as did Uncle Wiggily. "Here I am, and with a fine lot of clover for dinner and supper. But where are the children? Where is Sammie? Where is Susie? And where is that mischievous little tyke, Baby Bunty? I hope she isn't hiding in the bushes to jump out and cry 'boo!' at me," said Mr. Littletail, pretending to be frightened.

"I think you forget," said his wife, "that this is the day the children were to go to Sugar Island with Uncle Wiggily."

"Oh, so I did! This is the day!" said the bunny gentleman. "And so Sammie, Susie and Baby Bunty have gone camping, have they?" He put down the bundle of clover, and straightened his bent back.

"Well, Susie and Bunty went," explained his wife. "But Sammie hasn't gone yet."

"Why not?" his father wanted to know.

"Because he went in swimming to wash his ears. And when he came out of the water he left his clothes in a pile on the bank and went hopping off through the woods, because he was so happy, I suppose. And the result was," said Mrs. Littletail, speaking serious like, "the result

was that while Sammie was off dancing in the woods, Uncle Wiggily hopped along. He couldn't wait, because he was in a hurry to go to Sugar Island, so he took Susie and Bunty and the other children with him, and promised to return for Sammie in a few days. And Sammie will be much disappointed."

"Yes," said Mr. Littletail, "he will, but it will be a lesson to him. And, now that I am home—though I thought I would never get here—I think I will go to the swimming brook and see if Sammie has returned for his jacket and trousers. I shall tell him how foolish he was to go dancing off in the forest."

"Yes, please do," advised Mrs. Littletail. "But why did you think you would never get home with the clover?"

"Because the Bob Cat chased me. I guess he thought I was Uncle Wiggily and he wanted to nibble my ears. But I fooled him! Oh, yes, indeed, I fooled that bad chap!"

"How?" asked Mrs. Longears, who was quite proud of her husband.

"I crawled in a hollow log and stuffed clover in each end," explained Sammie's father with a

chuckling laugh. "The old Bob Cat came sniffing along, trying to wag his silly, stump of a tail. He saw the hollow log, but he didn't see me, on account of the clover. Then when he went away I crawled out and here I am."

"Very glad I am to see you, too!" exclaimed the rabbit lady. "And while I get some of this clover ready for dinner, you go back where Sammie left his clothes and see if he has returned to put them on. I should think he would have had enough of dancing in the woods by this time."

"Yes, indeed," agreed Sammie's father, as he hopped away.

You see they all thought Sammie had just gone away joyfully to play by himself without his clothes. None of them dreamed that the bunny boy had been caught by Neil and Joan and put in a wooden cage. But that is just what had happened.

Now before Mr. Littletail reached the place where Sammie had left his jacket and trousers, the playful wind sprang up from the Purple Valley where it had been sleeping that hot,

summer day, and the wind played a queer prank.

Along blew the breeze, bending the bushes and trees, whistling across the brook and sending up little clouds of dust. Then the wind saw Sammie's clothes lying on the bank.

"Oh, what jolly fun!" whistled the wind. "I'll blow those clothes up in the air like a pair of kites! That's what I'll do! I'll make kites of Sammie's jacket and trousers!"

"Puff!" went the breeze, and Sammie's jacket rose up, flopped around and sailed off through the air, coming to rest, at last, on the branch of a high tree.

"Ha! Ha!" laughed the wind. "That was jolly! Now for the other!"

There came another puff of the breeze and Sammie's trousers darted up from the ground, the legs bulging out as if the little rabbit boy's paws were in them.

"Ho! Ho!" chuckled the wind. "Isn't this fun?" And it blew the trousers away and away until they caught on a mulberry bush in a green, mossy glen.

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So that is what the playful wind did to Sammie's garments, and when Mr. Littletail reached the place where his son had left the clothes the garments were not there. All the father rabbit could see were the marks of Sammie's paws in the soft ground on the edge of the brook.

"I see what has happened," said Mr. Littletail. "Sammie got tired of dancing in the woods. He came back here, put on his clothes and ran to catch up to Uncle Wiggily and the others. So Sammie must be on Sugar Island now. He is all right. I will go home and tell my wife. She need no longer worry about our bunny boy."

Back to the burrow house hopped the rabbit gentleman.

"Where is Sammie? He hasn't come home," said Mrs. Littletail, anxiously.

"But his clothes are gone," answered her husband. "They are no longer in the woods. Sammie came back for his jacket and trousers, and he has sailed to Sugar Island with Uncle Wiggily."

"Oh, then everything is all right," said the bunny lady. "I am so glad."

But everything wasn't all right, as we know. For the wind, and not Sammie, had taken the garments, and poor Sammie was still shut up in the wooden cage.

"I wonder how I am ever going to get out?" thought unhappy Sammie.

CHAPTER VII

UNCLE WIGGILY'S CANDY TREAT

JIMMIE WIBBLEWOBBLE, the boy duck, had come to Sugar Island with his sisters Lulu and Alice, swimming over from the main land as I told you. And, as you remember, no sooner had Jimmie begun to waddle up the island path, where Uncle Wiggily and his animal children friends had landed from the washtub motor boat, than Jimmie quacked:

"Listen, Uncle Wiggily! I have something to tell you!"

"Is it about my brother Sammie?" quickly asked Susie. "Oh, I beg your pardon, Uncle Wiggily, for speaking out of my turn," said the little rabbit girl politely, "but I am so anxious about Sammie!"

"That's all right, my dear, you are excused," answered Uncle Wiggily kindly. "Tell us, Jimmie," he went on, "is what you have to say anything about Sammie? He is lost, you know,

or, at least, he has gone off in the forest by himself."

"No," quacked Jimmie, "I don't know anything about Sammie—I mean I don't know where he is. But I saw Bully and Bawly Nottail, the frog boys swimming over here, and they said something about seeing him go in swimming and then seeing him dancing around in the woods without his jacket and trousers."

"Yes, he did that," said Uncle Wiggily. "And I dare say Sammie will be at home, waiting for me, when I go to get the next boat-load of children who are to come to Sugar Island. But what did you want to tell me, Jimmie? I beg your pardon for not letting you go on."

"Oh, that's all right," quacked the duck boy, sort of bashful like at hearing Uncle Wiggily beg his pardon. "But on the way over, when Lulu and Alice and I were swimming, a boat passed us, and in the boat was a man and a woman and a girl and a boy."

"Well, there is nothing very wonderful in that, Jimmie," spoke the rabbit uncle, twinkling his pink nose smiling like. "I suppose this was a little family party going on a picnic.

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Green Lake is large, and real folks, besides us animals, often camp out on it."

"Yes, but that isn't all!" eagerly quacked Jimmie. "You should have heard what that boy and girl said!"

"What did they say?" asked Buddy, the guinea pig boy, who, with his sister Brighteyes, was in the Sugar Island party.

"I heard the boy say he was coming here," quacked Lulu, who did not want her brother to tell all the exciting story.

"And the girl said the same thing," added Alice, who was more gentle and romantic than her sister. Lulu was quite a tom-duck, I must tell you, always playing with Jimmie and the other boy animals.

"Do you mean they are coming here—to Sugar Island?" asked Uncle Wiggily, somewhat surprised.

"That's what the boy and girl said," went on Jimmie. For, like Sammie Littletail, the boy duck could understand our kind of talk, though he could not speak it himself. "They are coming here to camp. I heard them say so. What do you think of that, Uncle Wiggily?" and

Jimmie gave his tail a funny wobble from side to side.

"Well, there is nothing to be afraid about," spoke Mr. Longears. "Sugar Island is a large place—there is plenty of room on it for us to camp as well as for that boy and girl and their father and mother—for I suppose they were in the boat."

"Yes," agreed Jimmie, "the boy's father and mother were with him. But I haven't told you all yet. The worst is yet to come!"

"Oh, for mercy sakes!" exclaimed Susie. "Go on—hurry—do tell us, Jimmie!"

"Yes," added Uncle Wiggily. "If Aunt Lettie, the lady goat were here, you would make her very nervous, Jimmie, with the way you are acting. Go on, please. What remains to be told?"

"Why, this!" whispered the duck boy, speaking in a low voice. "There was something else in the boat besides those real people. Something else!"

"I guess you mean something to eat," barked Jackie Bow Wow.

"That's it!" whined his brother Peetie. "Peo-

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ple always bring something to eat when they come camping on Sugar Island."

"No! It wasn't something to eat!" quacked Jimmie. "It was—a trap!"

"A trap!" cried Uncle Wiggily, and his pink, twinkling nose turned a little pale.

"Well, maybe not exactly a trap," went on the duck boy, "but it was a cage, and that's almost the same thing. It was a wooden cage, with wire netting over the front. And maybe that boy and girl are bringing the cage to Sugar Island to catch you, or some of us, Uncle Wiggily?"

"Oh, don't say such things!" whistled Bright-eyes the little guinea pig girl. She and her brother talked in a sort of whistle, you know.

"Are you sure it was a cage, Jimmie?" asked Uncle Wiggily.

"Yes," quacked the boy duck, "I am. You can ask my sisters."

All eyes were now turned toward Lulu and Alice who were preening their feathers after their swim over to Sugar Island.

"Well, Lulu," asked Mr. Longears, "what do you say?"



"It was a trap!" quacked Jimmie.

"I'm afraid it was a cage," answered the duck girl. "It was made of wood, and had wire netting in front. It was on one of the seats of the boat and I heard the boy say: 'He won't get out of this cage.' That's what he said."

"Yes, I heard him, too," added Alice, standing on one webbed foot.

"Was anyone in the cage?" Uncle Wiggily wanted to know.

"I couldn't see," replied Jimmie. "I didn't want to go too close to the boat for fear they might catch one of my sisters. But I guess the cage was empty, and that they are bringing it to Sugar Island to put one of us in—maybe you, Uncle Wiggily!"

"Oh, don't say such things!" whistled Bright-eyes again.

"Nonsense!" squeaked Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy. "There is nothing to be afraid of; is there?" and she turned to Uncle Wiggily, for she did not want the picnic on Sugar Island spoiled in this way.

"Nothing at all!" answered the rabbit gentleman. "I have lived a good many years in the woods," he went on, "the Fox, the Wolf, the

Bob Cat and the Skillery Scallery Alligator, with the double-jointed tail, have often tried to catch me, but they never have yet! And if ever I was put in a cage or caught in a trap I got out again. So I am not at all afraid and I don't want you children to be, either.

"Don't talk any more about it, Jimmie, though of course it was good and right of you to mention it," continued Uncle Wiggily. "These people may be coming to Sugar Island to camp. Very good—it is a large island and there is room on it for all of us. We can hide on one end of it and keep out of the way of this boy and girl with their cage.

"Perhaps, after all, it was only some sort of a game they play," said the rabbit uncle. "Maybe it wasn't a cage or trap. It might have been just a box with some playthings in. Don't worry about it."

"Think of something else!" squeaked Nurse Jane with a laugh. "Uncle Wiggily is going to make some candy—aren't you?" she asked the bunny gentleman.

"Why—er—I hadn't thought of it until you spoke," he said, slowly and thoughtful like.

"But, being on Sugar Island, it would seem the right thing to do to have candy. Yes, I'll make some, children!"

"Will it be maple sugar candy?" Tommie Kat wanted to know.

"The only time I can make maple sugar candy is in the spring of the year," answered the rabbit gentleman. "For only in the spring does the sweet sap run in the maple trees. And it is this sweet sap, or juice, which, when boiled down, makes maple candy. But I will make another kind."

"What kind?" asked Johnnie Bushytail.

"Honey candy," answered Uncle Wiggily. "Scatter now, all of you, and look for a bee tree."

"Why should we look for a bee tree?" Susie wanted to know.

"Because only the bees make honey, and they store it in hollow trees," explained Uncle Wiggily. "So we must find a bee tree to get honey—I will ask the Queen Bee to give me some that I may make a candy treat for my guests on Sugar Island. Come now—let's see who will be the first to find a bee tree!"

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"And while they are searching I will get the beds ready for to-night," went on Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy.

"Yes, that will be a good idea," agreed Uncle Wiggily.

"Bee tree! Bee tree! We must find the bee tree!" sang the animal boys and girls as they ran about in the woods of Sugar Island. Uncle Wiggily was hopping after them, to see that they came to no harm when, all of a sudden, Jackie Bow Wow gave a low growl and whispered:

"Hark! Listen! Some one is coming, Uncle Wiggily! Maybe it's that boy and girl with the cage!"

CHAPTER VIII

SAMMIE ON THE ISLAND

WHILE Susie Littletail, the girl rabbit, together with the pussy cat children, the Wibble-wobble ducks, Buddy and Brighteyes the guinea pigs and the different animal boys and girls scampered around Sugar Island looking for the bee tree, Uncle Wiggily and Jackie Bow Wow remained quietly in the bushes. They were listening to the noise which the puppy dog had heard.

"Yes, some real people are coming," spoke Uncle Wiggily, for he heard their talk. Mr. Longears could understand man-language though he could not speak it himself. Just as your dog understands you when you say: "Come here, sir!" He comes to you, wagging his tail, and he tries very hard to talk to you, but he cannot. Though he knows what you say to him.

Peering through the bushes, Uncle Wiggily saw, as did Jackie, a boy and a girl and a man

and a woman, walking up a path that led from a dock, where a motor boat was made fast. This was a large boat, much bigger than Uncle Wiggily's which, as I have told you, was made from an old wash-tub, though it served the bunny gentleman very well.

"I see what is going to happen," whispered Uncle Wiggily to Jackie. "These people must have a cottage on this island. They have come here to spend the summer. Very well, that will not bother us, nor shall we bother them. Both parties can live happily on Sugar Island."

"Do you see what that boy is carrying?" asked the little dog chap of the rabbit gentleman.

"Yes," answered Uncle Wiggily, "it is a box, with a wire netting over the front. It must be the cage that Jimmie quacked about."

"It is," agreed Jackie. "And do you think anyone is in the cage, Uncle Wiggily—I mean any of our animal friends?" the little puppy dog asked, anxiously.

Mr. Longears stood up on his tiptoes and peered over the tops of the bushes at the boy Neil who was walking along, carrying the wooden cage. Beside the boy walked his sister

Joan. Uncle Wiggily took good care not to raise his head too far above the bushes—he did not want the children nor their parents to see him. Carefully he looked at the cage.

“No,” said the rabbit gentleman at last, in a whisper to Jackie, “there is nothing in the cage—it is empty.”

“Maybe that boy hopes he can catch something—maybe one of us animals—to put in his box,” suggested Jackie.

“Perhaps,” agreed Mr. Longears. “But now the cage is empty.”

However, the cage wasn’t empty, as we know, for inside was Sammie Littletail, the missing rabbit boy. If only he had known his friends Uncle Wiggily and Jackie were so near at hand—looking at the very cage in which he was shut—why Sammie might have called out—Uncle Wiggily might have found some way of rescuing him.

But poor Sammie was fast asleep, curled in a corner of the cage. He did not even know he was on Sugar Island, but he was—he had been brought there in the motor boat when Neil and his sister, with their father and mother, came to

camp for the summer, just as Uncle Wiggily had guessed.

But what Uncle Wiggily didn't guess was that Sammie was in that cage. No, indeed—the rabbit gentleman didn't even dream of such a thing. Mr. Longears thought, by this time, that Sammie had finished his jolly dance in the forest, had put on his clothes and had gone back home.

Mr. and Mrs. Littletail, not finding Sammie's clothes in the woods, thought their little rabbit boy had come back, put on his garments and then had hopped to the boat dock in time to go to Sugar Island with Uncle Wiggily.

And, all this while, Sammie was a prisoner in the wooden cage. Neil and Joan had given him good things to eat, thrusting them in through the wire netting in front of the wooden box. But poor Sammie was too frightened to eat. His heart was still beating fast—almost as fast as when Neil had caught him beside the brook.

"I can't eat! I don't ever want to eat again!" sighed Sammie to himself as he jumped about the cage, trying to find a way out. But there

was none and at last the little rabbit curled up in a corner and fell asleep from weariness.

Mr. and Mrs. Chadwick were almost ready to go on their trip to Sugar Island when Neil and his sister wandered down by the brook and caught Sammie. And after the rabbit boy had been put in the cage the family went aboard their boat and sailed on their summer outing.

"It will be jolly fun to have this little rabbit with us," Neil said to his sister in the motor boat on the way over from the main land.

"Yes," she agreed. "But I hope nothing is the matter with him, Neil. He's curled up so quietly in the corner."

"He's only sleeping," the boy said. "When we get settled in our cottage, and he wakes up and eats, then I'm going to teach that rabbit some tricks."

So it was that Sammie had come to Sugar Island, being carried right in plain sight of Uncle Wiggily. But the rabbit gentleman did not see the little bunny boy hunched up in a corner of the cage.

"Well," said Mr. Longears to Jackie as the Chadwick family marched on up the hill to

their cottage on the other end of the island, "we need have no fear of them. Now that we know they have a cage, or a trap, we shall take care to keep out of it."

"Yes, indeed," barked Jackie. "I don't want to be caught in a trap. But do you s'pose there are any of the bad chaps on this island, Uncle Wiggily—I mean the Fox, the Wolf or the Bob Cat?"

"Oh, I guess they won't bother us," answered Mr. Longears, laughing. But, at the same time, he made up his mind he would watch carefully so that no harm would happen to the little animal boys and girls. "Come along now, Jackie," went on Uncle Wiggily, "we must follow the others and look for the bee tree so I can make the candy."

"Hurray for the bee tree!" barked Jackie as he scampered off after Uncle Wiggily who was hopping through the bushes.

Neil and his sister, walking along with the cage containing Sammie, heard Jackie's joyful bark.

"Listen to that!" whispered Joan.

"It's nothing but a dog," said her brother.

"There are lots of dogs on this island, I guess."

"I hope none of them chase this little rabbit," spoke the girl, who had a very kind heart.

"There won't be any danger of that," laughed Neil. "I won't let him out of the cage when any dogs are near."

Just as Jackie gave that joyful bark, because he was happy over the thought of honey candy, Sammie awakened in the cage and heard it.

"Why—why!" whispered the rabbit boy to himself, "that sounds just like Jackie Bow Wow! Oh, if it only is and he has come to get me out! Jackie! Jackie! Here I am!" cried Sammie in animal talk. "Here I am! Come and help me out of this cage!"

But by this time Jackie had trotted far away with Uncle Wiggily, eager to help search for the bee tree. So Jackie did not hear Sammie's call for help. Neil and his sister saw Sammie jumping around in the cage, and they heard the queer noise he made.

"It sounds just as if he were talking," said Joan.

"Rabbits can't talk!" laughed her brother. "Ho! Ho! Rabbits can't talk!"

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But, just the same, Sammie was talking—he was calling to Jackie to rescue him—only Jackie didn't hear.

Then Neil carried the wooden cage, with Sammie in it, up on the porch of the summer cottage.

"Well, here we are—on Sugar Island!" exclaimed Mrs. Chadwick. "Now, children, help unpack and then you may play. It is good to be here again. I love it on Sugar Island!"

"Sugar Island! Sugar Island!" whispered Sammie to himself as he sniffed at a piece of carrot. "This is the place where Uncle Wiggily was going to bring me, if I hadn't been so silly as to run off after my swim. Sugar Island! I'm here, but is Uncle Wiggily here? That's what I want to know. If he is, maybe he can get me out of this cage."

This thought made Sammie feel a little happier. He was beginning to feel hungry, also, after his swim, and his heart wasn't beating quite so fast now.

"I think I will nibble a bit of carrot," said the rabbit boy. And he did, so that when, a little later, Joan passed the cage, carrying some

things from the boat into the cottage she saw him, and called to her brother:

“Oh, Neil! Look! The little bunny is eating! Oh, isn’t he cute! And how funny his pink nose twinkles!”

Sammie looked out through the wire netting and the children looked in at him.

“They seem kind,” thought the little rabbit chap. “Maybe, after all, I shall be well treated. But I want to get out! No matter how kind they are to me, I want to get out of this cage! Maybe to-night I can break loose or dig my way out! I’m going to try!”

CHAPTER IX

SUSIE AND THE BOB CAT

THROUGH the forest on Sugar Island ran, hopped, skipped, flew and fluttered the animal boys and girls. Each one was using his or her bright eyes to be the first to see a bee tree.

"Isn't Uncle Wiggily coming with us?" asked Susie as she hopped beside Kittie Kat, whose brothers Tommie and Joie were hurrying along with Peetie Bow Wow.

"Yes, he's coming," croaked Bully the frog boy who, after having swam over from the main land, was now hopping on the dry shore with his brother Bawly. "Uncle Wiggily is coming!"

"And my brother Jackie is with him," barked Peetie. "I guess they stopped to help Nurse Jane get the beds ready for to-night."

But what Jackie and Uncle Wiggily had stopped for was to look at the boy and girl with the wooden cage.

"Listen, my dears," said Uncle Wiggily when he and Jackie had caught up to the others, "you must be careful while you are here on Sugar Island. Jackie and I just saw a family come here to live in a cottage. There is a boy and a girl, and, while they may be kind, and love animals, still it is better for us to be safe and keep out of their way. They may try to catch some of us."

"You didn't see my brother Sammie, did you?" asked Susie.

"No," answered Mr. Longears, "we didn't see Sammie."

But, had he only known it, Uncle Wiggily had looked straight at the cage in which Sammie was kept a prisoner.

"So be careful, children," warned the rabbit uncle. "Nurse Jane and I will look after you as best we can, but you must be cautious on your own account. Now, has anyone seen a bee tree?"

"Isn't that one over there?" asked Jollie Longtail, the mouse boy who, with his sister Jillie had come on the island picnic.

"No, that is a basswood tree," answered

Uncle Wiggily. "But bees get sweet juice, which they make into honey, from basswood tree blossoms, so I would not be surprised if, soon, we came to a bee tree."

"Oh, I know what to do!" suddenly squeaked Jillie the little mouse child.

"What?" asked Uncle Wiggily with a smile. "What shall we do, Jillie?"

"Let Neddie and Beckie Stubtail, the two bears, go on ahead," suggested Jillie. "They have good noses for smelling and they love sweets, so they may smell the honey in the bee tree before we see it."

"That's a good idea!" said Uncle Wiggily with a laugh. "Come, Neddie and Beckie and use your sharp-smelling noses."

From the middle of the procession of animal children, where they had been shuffling along on their broad, padded paws, Neddie and Beckie Stubtail were called and put at the head of the cavalcade. All bears love sweet things to eat, and often, in the woods, bears can scent a honey tree when they are a long way from it. A honey tree is one in which wild bees store

their sweet food, as tame bees store their honey in hives.

“Do your best now, Neddie, and you too, Beckie!” said Uncle Wiggily. The little bear children shuffled along, their noses raised in the air, sniffing and snuffing.

All of a sudden Susie Littletail, who had wandered off to one side of the path, to gather some red flowers which she was going to give to Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy—all of a sudden Susie gave a cry of alarm.

“Have you found the bee tree?” asked Uncle Wiggily quickly.

“There is one near here—I can smell it,” growled Neddie the bear boy—not that he was cross when he growled—that was only his way of speaking.

“No, I don’t see any bee tree,” called Susie. “But something is chasing me! Something is coming after me in the tall weeds! Oh, Uncle Wiggily!”

From the top of a clump of grass, where he stood, Uncle Wiggily could see the tall weeds moving behind Susie as she ran through them,

her paws filled with red flowers. And then the rabbit gentleman caught sight of a short, stubby tail—not Susie's tail, though hers was stubby enough.

“It's the Bob Cat!” cried the rabbit gentleman. “The Bob Cat is after Susie! Run! Run!” he cried. “Run, Susie or the Bob Cat will get you!”

CHAPTER X

A NOISE IN THE NIGHT

SURELY enough the Bob Cat, with his silly little tail, was slinking along through the tall grass and weeds, trying to catch Susie the rabbit girl. The Bob Cat, or Lynx, as he is sometimes called, is very fond of rabbits—together too fond, the rabbits think. This Bob Cat had been hiding in the tangled underbrush of Sugar Island when Uncle Wiggily and his animal friends landed.

"I can easily catch one of them," said the sly Bob Cat to himself. So he had watched his chance, until Susie wandered off to pick flowers for Nurse Jane, and then the bad chap had stalked after the little bunny child.

"Oh! Oh!" cried Susie when she heard Uncle Wiggily's warning call. And you may be sure she ran. Oh, how fast she hopped!

The Bob Cat ran also, for he was hungry and he knew a rabbit meal would be very good indeed.

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"Hurry, Susie! Hurry!" mewed Kittie Kat.

"I am hurrying all I can," Susie replied. "But can't some of you do something to drive the Bob Cat away? Oh, if my brother were here he would fix the bad chap! Sammie! Sammie!" cried Susie. But Sammie was shut up in the wooden cage and could not hear his sister calling.

"Oh, Uncle Wiggily!" barked Jackie Bow Wow, "if you only had a pop gun you could shoot the Bob Cat!"

"I've got a little pop gun, but I left it back where Nurse Jane is getting the beds ready for to-night," chattered Billie Bushytail.

"Well, I have some talcum powder, and if Uncle Wiggily had a gun he could shoot some of my talcum powder in that," spoke Baby Bunty. "It's lovely-smelling talcum powder, too—just like flowers—but I'd let it be shot at the Bob Cat if that would drive him away."

"That is very kind of you, Baby Bunty," said the rabbit gentleman, "but I have no gun to shoot talcum powder. However perhaps if I blow some from the tip of my paw at the Bob Cat it may frighten him away."

"You've got to do something very soon!" gasped poor Susie who was getting out of breath from her fast running. "The Bob Cat almost has me in his claws!" And, indeed, the bad chap was now quite close to the little rabbit child.

"Quick! Give me some of that talcum powder, Bunty!" cried Uncle Wiggily, and Bunty poured some out into the rabbit gentleman's paw from the box in which she carried the perfumed stuff.

Uncle Wiggily held out his paw with the talcum powder on it.

"Puff!" blew the rabbit and a cloud of the sweet-scented powder shot toward the Bob Cat who was close behind Susie.

"Ho! Ho! As if I were afraid of that kind of powder!" laughed the unpleasant creature. "You can't — ker-choo — ker-foo! Ah — ker-snitzio—you can't scare me with talcum powder—ker-choo!" and he sneezed again, for some of the powder got up his nose. Susie sneezed also as did Uncle Wiggily and Baby Bunty, and there was quite a bit of sneezing in the woods just then.

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But still the Bob Cat was chasing after Susie and it looked as if the little rabbit girl would be caught when, all of a sudden, Uncle Wiggily took off his tall, silk hat and threw it right at the Bob Cat.

Straight as a cannon ball went the rabbit gentleman's hat, and it hit the Bob Cat in the face, covering his eyes for a moment.

"Now's your chance, Susie!" barked Jackie the puppy. "Run to one side and hide! Hop fast!"

But before Susie could do that the bad chap, with one sweep of his paw, knocked the hat from his head, tossing it to one side.

"That's no way to treat a gentleman's hat," said Uncle Wiggily, stiff and formal like. But little the Bob Cat cared for that. Now he could see again, and once more he raced after Susie, faster than before.

"Oh, Sammie! Sammie!" cried the poor bunny child. But Sammie could not hear—he was too far away; and, besides, he was shut up in a cage.

But, all at once, just when Susie felt sure the Bob Cat's claws were going to tear her new



"I'm stung!" howled the Bob Cat

calico dress, all at once the bad chap stopped, jumped up in the air, turned around and howled.

"Wow! Wow! Wiffie!" howled the Bob Cat, and then he began slapping at his head with his front paws.

"What's the matter with him?" crowed Charlie the rooster.

"I'm stung! I'm stung!" howled the Bob Cat. And then Uncle Wiggily and the animal children saw a swarm of bees zipping and zooming around the Bob Cat. Right at the bad chap they darted, stinging him on his head, body and legs. But none of the bees stung Susie, Uncle Wiggily or any of the Sugar Island picnic party.

"Don't sting me any more!" begged the bad chap of the bees. "I'll be good! I won't hurt Susie!"

"You had better not!" buzzed the Queen Bee who took no part in the stinging, though she told her Worker bees to make the Bob Cat tingle, which they did. Oh, how they made him tingle!

Then, smarting and full of pains from the

bee stings, the Bob Cat gave his silly little tail a flip, turned around and slunk off into the tall grass, rolling over and over to brush off the insects. And the last Uncle Wiggily and his friends saw of him was the bad chap holding his nose in a puddle of mud—for mud takes away some of the pain of bee stings.

“Well, my dear, you were quite frightened; weren’t you?” buzzed the Queen Bee to Susie, who sank down on a grassy hillock to rest.

“Yes, Queen, I was,” Susie answered. “Excuse me for sitting in your presence, Queen, but how did you happen to send your bees out to sting the Bob Cat and save me?” asked the little rabbit girl.

“Oh, my bees and I were out looking for flowers from which to gather honey,” answered the Queen, “when I happened to notice you running along and the Bob Cat chasing you. I saw Uncle Wiggily try to stop the bad chap with talcum powder and his hat and then I told my bees to go to work.”

“And they certainly did!” chuckled the rabbit gentleman as he picked up his tall, silk hat

from where the Bob Cat had knocked it. "They certainly did!"

"Yes, my Workers do just what I tell them to do," buzzed the Queen, who was of larger size than any of the other bees; longer and more slender and graceful.

All of a sudden Neddie Stubtail growled:

"I smell honey! I smell honey!"

"So do I!" whined his sister Beckie.

"Well, it's a wonder you wouldn't with a lot of bees around us," laughed Uncle Wiggily. "And perhaps we are near the bee's honey tree," he went on.

"Yes, our hive tree, which is filled with honey, is near here," buzzed the Queen.

"Then this is the place we are looking for," went on the rabbit gentleman. "I brought the animal children to Sugar Island," he told the Queen, "and, naturally, they want me to make them some candy."

"Naturally," said the Queen Bee, laughing in a low voice.

"Well," proceeded the rabbit, "as there is no maple sap in the trees now to make maple

sugar candy, I told them I would make them some honey candy, if I could find a bee tree. For to get honey you must have bees," spoke the rabbit.

"Naturally," said the Queen again, laughing once more.

"Well," said Uncle Wiggily, "do you think you could spare me some honey?"

"As much as you wish," the Queen graciously answered.

"Hurray! Hurrah! Hurroo!" cried the animal boys and girls. "Three cheers for the honey candy!"

Johnnie and Billie Bushytail, the squirrels, made some boxes out of pieces of birch bark which they gnawed off trees, and into these bark boxes the Queen's bees put a lot of sweet clover and basswood honey. They also gave Uncle Wiggily a dark honey made from buckwheat flowers.

"Now we shall go back to our camping place, where we left Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy making the beds, and there we shall have lunch and I'll make the honey candy and give the children their treat," said Uncle Wiggily.

"Thank you, Queen, for the honey, and thank you, also, for having your bees drive the Bob Cat away."

"Pray do not mention it," buzzed the Queen politely and then she and her bees flew to gather more flower juice for honey, while Uncle Wiggily led the animal boys and girls back to their camping place.

Nurse Jane had found a number of hollow trees, logs and stumps, and these she had lined with soft leaves and dried grass. In one big hollow tree Uncle Wiggily would sleep, and near his tree, in smaller ones, the animal boys would go to bed.

In another hollow tree Nurse Jane made her bed ready for the night, and near her sleeping place were other, and smaller, hollow trees, in which the girl animal campers would rest.

But it was still early in the day, and, after eating their lunches, the children gathered around a camp fire which Uncle Wiggily made and over which he boiled the honey to turn into candy.

When the honey had boiled long enough Uncle Wiggily poured it out on clean leaves

to cool. There were several kinds of candy—lollypops, gum drops, jelly beans, molasses taffy and “cheweyum,” which latter is a very long-lasting sort of sweet.

“Oh, isn’t this jolly!” growled Neddie Stub-tail as the little bear boy sat by his sister nibbling at a chunk of the cheweyum candy.

“It’s the nicest picnic we ever had,” agreed Beckie. “And the best part of it is that it’s going to last a week. We don’t have to go back home to-night.”

“No,” said Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy, “you are going to stay on the island all night and for several more nights and days. But now I want some of you children to come and help me set the table for supper.”

The girl animals did this, while the boys gathered wood for the camp fire, and Neddie, being strong, carried pails of water from the spring.

“Oh, I wish Sammie were here,” said Susie a bit sadly as they all sat down to their supper in the woods. “Sammie just loves a camping picnic.”

“Well, I’ll go get him maybe day after

to-morrow," promised Uncle Wiggily, who thought that Sammmie was safe at home. Just as Mr. and Mrs. Littletail thought their boy bunny was safe on Sugar Island with Uncle Wiggily.

Sammie was on Sugar Island, as we know, but he was shut up in the wooden cage.

After supper the animal boys and girls sat about the camp fire singing songs, led by the crickets and tree toads. Then Uncle Wiggily told them some Bedtime Stories and soon it was the hour for them to go to sleep.

It was about in the middle of the night, when it was very, very dark, quiet and still in the forest on Sugar Island that Tommie Kat, the pussy boy, suddenly awakened. He had heard a noise that caused him to open his eyes and sit up in his leaf and grass bed in a hollow tree. Sleeping beside Tommie was his brother Joie.

"What's the matter?" whispered Joie. "Why are you getting up, Tommie?"

"Because," whispered Tommie, "I heard a queer noise! And I see something! Something is creeping toward Uncle Wiggily's tree!"

CHAPTER XI

SAMMIE TRIES TO GET OUT

JOIE KAT crawled out of his bed and crept over beside his brother Tommie, who had heard the noise in the night. Joie wanted to see what Tommie said he had seen—something making its way toward Uncle Wiggily's hollow sleeping tree. For the old rabbit gentleman had a tree to himself, while, back of it, in a half circle, were the hollow trees, logs and stumps of the animal boys who had come to camp on Sugar Island.

"What is it that's creeping toward Uncle Wiggily's tree?" whispered Joie to Tommie.

"I can't see very well," answered the other pussy boy, "but it looks like a big, white cake of ice."

"Pooh!" exclaimed Joie with a little laugh, "a cake of ice can't creep."

"Well, it can slide, and that's almost the same as creeping," went on Tommie. "Look! There it is!"

Surely enough Joie saw it now—a large, white object going along through the darkness of the night toward Uncle Wiggily's tree. The night wasn't completely black, for, if it had been, Joie and Tommie could not have seen anything, even though, like most cats, they can see in the dark better than you can or I can.

"What you s'pose it is?" whispered Joie.

"Doesn't it look like a cake of ice?" asked Tommie.

"Yes," admitted Joie, "but what would a cake of ice be doing on Sugar Island in the summer time? If this was winter now, that would be different."

The two little pussy boys were wondering and wondering what the white thing could be, and they were thinking perhaps they had better call Jackie and Peetie Bow Wow, when, all of a sudden the white, moving object near Uncle Wiggily's tree gave a loud sneeze.

"There!" exclaimed Joie, hearing the sneeze, "ice never makes an a-ker-choo sound like that!"

"No, I guess it doesn't," agreed Tommie. "But what is it?"

Uncle Wiggily must have been awakened by the sneeze, for he called out loudly:

“Who is there?”

“Don’t be frightened,” answered a gentle, growling voice, “but I smelled the honey candy you made, Uncle Wiggily, and I came over from the main shore to get some. I hope there’s a bit left!”

“Oh, hello, Mr. Whitewash!” cried the rabbit gentleman, jumping out of his hollow tree and holding up a bottle filled with lightning bugs. This was the bunny’s firefly lantern.

And by the light of the flickering bugs in the bottle, Joie and Tommie could see Uncle Wiggily, in his pajamas shaking paws with Mr. Whitewash, the polar bear gentleman who had shuffled his way up from the shore.

“How did you get over from the main land?” asked Uncle Wiggily.

“I swam,” answered the white bear. “Swimming that little distance was nothing to me. Up at the North Pole where I came from I often swim many miles even when the ocean is filled with floating icebergs. This swim was nothing. But could I have a bit of honey candy? I

smelled yours cooking and I just had to come and beg for some."

"You will not have to beg very hard," laughed Uncle Wiggily. "Here, take as much candy as you wish," and he handed him some on a broad green leaf—some of the gumdrop kind, which Mr. Whitewash liked very much. "Get in this hollow tree next to mine and go to sleep now," said Uncle Wiggily to the bear. "We mustn't wake up the little boy and girl animals who are camping here with me. In the morning you may see them all."

"He doesn't know we are awake," whispered Joie to Tommie.

"No," answered the other pussy boy. "But I was right; wasn't I? Mr. Whitewash, the polar bear, does look a little like a cake of ice; especially in the dark."

"Yes, he does," admitted Joie. Then he curled his tail around his neck, and Tommie did the same and soon the pussy cat boys were asleep again. None of the other animal children on Sugar Island appeared to have heard Mr. Whitewash arrive.

Now while this was going on in Uncle Wig-

gily's camp, something else was happening up at the cottage where Neil and Joan, the boy and girl, lived during the summer. They had gone to bed when night came, after a last look at Sammie Littletail in his wooden cage.

"I hope he sleeps all right," said Neil, putting one finger through the wire netting and gently rubbing Sammie's fur.

"I'll put some soft grass in the box so he will have a nice bed," said Joan. Opening a little door in the rear of the wooden box, Joan thrust in a bunch of dried, sweet grass she had gathered that afternoon. With it she put in some soft moss from the forest.

"Oh, if she would only open that door a little wider I could jump out!" thought Sammie, with wildly-beating heart as he saw the grass thrust in. But Joan quickly closed the hinged door, and the little bunny was still a prisoner.

But that night, when all was dark, quiet and still, Sammie got up from his bed of moss and grass, in a corner of the wooden cage. He could see in the blackness much better than you or I could, and he could also smell with his pink, twinkling nose. Sammie could smell

where some fresh air was blowing in around the edges of the hinged door that Joan had opened.

"I'm going to see if I can push that door open," said Sammie to himself. "I'm going to try to get out. If I can't push the door open maybe I can gnaw the edges with my teeth and make a hole so I can escape." Sammie's teeth, though very good for gnawing bark off trees, were not as good for gnawing wood as were the teeth of Johnnie and Billie Bushytail, the squirrels.

"But I'm going to try!" whispered Sammie to himself. "I want to get out of this cage! Kind as Neil and Joan are to me, I want to be free! I want to get my clothes back and camp with Uncle Wiggily and the others!"

Then the little rabbit boy stood up on his hind legs, with his mouth close to the edges of the little door. Oh, if he could only get out!

CHAPTER XII

PEETIE'S UMBRELLA

THIS was not the first time Sammie Littletail had tried to get out of a trap, or cage. Like most wild animals he had been caught before, but this was the first time he had been made a prisoner by a boy and girl.

Once Sammie crawled into an old, hollow log that was lying on the ground. The log was large at one end but smaller at the other end—like a funnel, and Sammie, full of curiosity, as are most young animals, kept pushing his way on until he was stuck in the log. He was frightened, but he remembered some of the things Uncle Wiggily had taught him, and so the little bunny tried to free himself.

And he did, too, after twisting about and gnawing away some of the rotten inside wood of the hollow log. Another time Sammie was caught by one leg in a tight loop of a wild grape vine, that was like the noose of a rope.

But out of this trap Sammie managed to escape by gnawing the vine through with his strong teeth. So now, when he was shut in the box cage Sammie thought he could gnaw his way out.

By feeling around with his tongue and lips Sammie found an edge of the little door that was not quite even and smooth with the back of the box. If the wood had been smooth Sammie could not have gnawed it, for he needed an edge to start on. Now, having found this edge, his heart beat high with hope.

"I'll soon gnaw my way out!" he said to himself. "Then I shall run around the island until I find Uncle Wiggily."

But alas for Sammie's hopes!

The night was very still and quiet. The rabbit's cage had been left on the porch just beneath the window of the room where Mrs. Chadwick slept. Now the mother of Joan and Neil was a light sleeper—the least noise would arouse her. And now she heard a gnawing sound that seemed to be at the head of her bed.

"There must be a mouse in here!" Mrs. Chadwick whispered to her husband.

"Only a little field mouse, perhaps," he said, sleepily. "It won't do any harm."

"The gnawing sound is very loud," said Mrs. Chadwick, getting up. "Much louder than a little field mouse would make. I'm going to see what it is—perhaps it's a big water rat!"

She was not afraid of animals—in fact she liked them. But she wanted to see what was causing this gnawing noise, which was like a tiny carpenter's saw moving back and forth in a piece of wood.

When Mrs. Chadwick got out of bed she could hear the sound much more plainly.

"It's just outside my window," she said to her husband as she took her flashlight from a chair. Then she happened to remember the wooden cage Neil and Joan had put there on the porch. "Oh, it's that little rabbit the children caught!" exclaimed their mother. "The bunny is trying to gnaw his way out of the box! If he gets away Neil and Joan will be much disappointed. I must stop him!"

Going outside, Mrs. Chadwick flashed her light on the box. She saw where Sammie had

started to gnaw. Some tiny slivers of wood, cut off by the bunny's strong teeth, had fallen on the porch floor.

"Oh, this will never do, little rabbit!" exclaimed Mrs. Chadwick with what she meant to be a jolly laugh. But it did not sound very jolly to poor Sammie. He had been found out! His plan to escape had been discovered! It was all over now!

The children's mother took a tin table tray and put it against the back of the box where the door was that Sammie had tried to gnaw through, and then she braced the box against the side of the cottage by putting a flatiron in front of it.

"Now you can't get away, little bunny," she said. "And in the morning Neil must line your box with tin—you can't gnaw through that!"

With a sinking heart Sammie said to himself that this was only too true! He could not gnaw through tin. Even now, though he might, during the remainder of the night, gnaw through the edge of the door, the tin tray would stop him.

"I guess I'll just have to stay a prisoner for ever!" said Sammie to himself, in a sad voice, as he curled up in a corner of his cage and went to sleep.

He knew it would be of no use to try to do anything more that night. But still he wasn't going to give up. He would watch his chance. Some day he might get out of the cage and join Uncle Wiggily and the others.

Morning came on Sugar Island. At the cottage Joan and Neil awakened and ran out to see their bunny. Their mother told them how she had heard the rabbit gnawing in the night, and how she had put the tray behind the box to keep him safe.

"You must get a tin cage, or line that one with some metal, else your rabbit will get out," she said to Neil.

"I wouldn't want that to happen," said the boy. "I'll make the cage stronger." And he began to do this after breakfast.

When the sun shone in the camp where Uncle Wiggily, Nurse Jane and the animal children had been sleeping, it roused them, and out they came scrambling, leaping, hopping,

jumping and flying from their hollow tree beds.

"Oh, here's Mr. Whitewash!" barked Jackie Bow Wow, catching sight of the polar bear. "I didn't know you were here!"

"We saw him come in the night; didn't we, Joie?" mewed Tommie Kat to his brother.

"And Tommie thought you were a cake of ice sliding along!" mewed Joie, at which Uncle Wiggily and the others laughed.

"Now, children, play about and have a good time," said Nurse Jane to the animal boys and girls after breakfast.

"They had better do most of their playing this morning," growled Mr. Whitewash, though his growl was very gentle.

"Why must they do their playing this morning?" asked Nurse Jane.

"Because it is going to rain this afternoon," answered the Polar Bear gentleman. "I can tell by the way my rheumatism pains."

"Yes, mine hurts a little, also," added Uncle Wiggily. "That is almost always a sign of rain. I had better take my red, white and blue striped rheumatism crutch with me to-day," he

said. So Nurse Jane brought the one she had gnawed from a cornstalk for the rabbit gentleman.

And that afternoon, when Peetie Bow Wow had asked Kittie Kat to take a little walk with him, it began to rain. Peetie and Kittie were strolling along one edge of Sugar Island when the rain drops began to fall.

"Oh! It's raining!" mewed Kittie, who, like most cats, did not like to get wet. "Didn't you bring an umbrella, Peetie?" he asked.

"Umbrella? No!" barked the doggie boy. "Pooh! Who's afraid of a little rain?"

"You may not be, but I am," said Kittie, "and I don't think it's at all nice of you not to have brought an umbrella, or a parasol, when you knew it was going to rain and spoil my fur! Oh, dear!" she mewed. Kittie was beginning to get cross.

"I didn't know it was going to rain!" barked Peetie.

"Well, you ought to have known it!" went on Kittie. "Anyhow, you shouldn't have asked me to come walking with you unless you could

call a taxicab or get an umbrella in case it rained—and it's raining now!"

There was no doubt of it—the rain was pelting down.

"But I can't call a taxicab here on Sugar Island," barked Peetie, who didn't quite know what to make of the fuss Kittie was causing. "And I haven't an umbrella—I can't even buy one—there is no umbrella store here!"

"Well, don't stand there staring at me!" mewed Kittie, who, I am sorry to say, was not as kind and polite as she might have been. "Do something! Keep me dry—get an umbrella!"

"How can I get an umbrella?" whined poor Peetie Bow Wow. "How can I?"

Then, all of a sudden, from the bushes on the edge of the lake, spoke a voice saying:

"There's an umbrella right behind you, Peetie, if you take the trouble to pick it! Look around!"

Peetie jumped in surprise and looked, wondering who had spoken.

CHAPTER XIII

BABY BUNTY'S TRICK

PERHAPS Peetie Bow Wow expected to see an umbrella hanging on one of the forest trees, as, sometimes, umbrellas and parasols hang on Christmas trees; as you may have seen when you rushed down stairs early on that jolly morning. However there was no umbrella, now, on any tree near Peetie and Kittie, and the little dog boy and pussy girl were getting wetter and wetter in the rain.

"Who was that speaking?" asked Kittie, looking at the edge of her dress which was dripping with water.

"I don't know," answered Peetie. "I can't see anybody. I thought it might be Uncle Wiggily, who had followed us with an umbrella."

"Ho! Ho! I'm not Uncle Wiggily!" laughed the voice that had spoken. "But, all the same, Peetie, there's an umbrella right beside you if you only know enough to pick it."

"Pick it!" barked Peetie. "Who ever heard of umbrellas growing so that they could be picked? And who are you, anyhow?"

"This umbrella is growing all right," went on the laughing voice. "And I'll show it to you and show you who I am, since you can't guess, and you can't seem to find the umbrella yourself."

With that, out from behind a big stone hopped Bully No-Tail, the frog boy. Bully did not have an umbrella, nor even a rubber coat. His skin was a sort of rubber and he didn't mind getting his clothes wet, for they dried quickly. There Bully stood, with the rain pelting down on him, and with one paw, which was almost like a little hand, Bully pointed to—well, now, what do you think the frog boy pointed at which was growing there and which might be used for an umbrella? What do you think?

Some of you have guessed, I know, but I'll tell the others.

It was a large toadstool, which is something like a mushroom, only with this difference—mushrooms are good to eat but toadstools are poison.

"Pick that big toadstool for an umbrella and keep the rain off Kittie Kat!" croaked Bully the frog. "I don't believe Mrs. Toad will want to sit on that stool to-day. Pick it for an umbrella, Peetie."

"Oh, why didn't I think of that before?" barked the little puppy chap. "So that's what you meant by an umbrella growing right near me, Bully?"

"Of course it was," croaked the green frog chap, while Peetie made a quick jump to one side of the path, broke off the long, thin stem of the toadstool and then, turning it up, like an umbrella, he held it over Kittie Kat.

"Thank you," mewed the little pussy girl, who wasn't so cross now.

"I should have thought of this before," barked Peetie. "I'm afraid you are very wet, Kittie."

"Oh, it doesn't matter very much," she answered. "I guess the sun will be out pretty soon and I'll dry. Anyhow I'm glad I'm not sugar nor salt, for they melt in the rain."

"So they do—so they do!" croaked Bully. "And next time you are caught in the rain,

Peetie, look around and see if there isn't near you a mushroom or toadstool you can use for an umbrella."

"I will, thank you," barked the doggie chap. "I didn't so much mind for myself," he added in a whisper to the frog boy, "but Kittie made such a fuss about getting wet."

"Yes, girls are always like that," croaked Bully in a low voice. "After you take her home come on out and we'll have some fun—I don't mind the rain."

"And I don't, either," said Peetie.

It did not shower much more after Peetie had picked the mushroom for an umbrella, and, as Kittie had said, the sun came out and, with the help of the wind which blew over Sugar Island, began to dry the animal children.

"Thank you, Peetie, for taking me on a nice walk," said Kittie when the little dog left her in the grove of trees where Uncle Wiggily had made a camp for the children. "And I'm sorry I was a bit cross about getting wet."

"Oh, that's all right!" barked Peetie and then he whistled for Jackie and they ran off to play jumping games with the two frog boys.

Baby Bunty, who had made a little play house of pine tree cones in the camping grove, hopped out of it just as Kittie came in from her walk in the rain.

"Where have you been?" asked Bunty, and Kittie told her, also speaking of the queer toadstool umbrella.

"Oh, may I have that toadstool now?" asked Bunty, for she saw that Kittie had no more use for it, since the rain was over.

"Why, yes," answered Kittie. "But what are you going to do with it, Bunty?"

"Oh—something!" answered the little rabbit child with a laugh. She didn't want to tell, for she had it in mind to play a trick on Uncle Wiggily. Bunty, the jolly little orphan rabbit, was always playing tricks or getting into mischief of one sort or another.

"Well, don't hurt yourself with this toadstool," mewed Kittie as she gave it to Bunty. And then Kittie went in her hollow tree to put on a dry dress, for the animal children had brought changes of garments with them when they came on the camping trip.

A little while after this Uncle Wiggily was



"Thank you," mewed the
little pussy girl.

sitting on a flat stump with Mr. Whitewash, the polar bear gentleman, talking about a little entertainment they were getting up for the children that evening.

"I will dance," said Mr. Whitewash, the polar bear gentleman.

"Have you ever danced before?" asked the rabbit uncle.

"No, not exactly," answered Mr. Whitewash, "but I have slid around on the slippery ice, and that is much the same thing."

"Yes," agreed Uncle Wiggily, "I suppose it is. Very well then, you shall dance at the entertainment and amuse the children."

"And what will you do?" asked the polar bear.

"I shall sing," answered Uncle Wiggily twinkling his pink nose very solemn and dignified like.

"Have you ever sung before?" inquired Mr. Whitewash.

"No, but I have opened my mouth and yelled," answered the bunny gentleman, "and that is very much like singing."

"True enough, so it is," agreed Mr. White-

wash. "Then you shall sing to entertain the children this evening."

Then Uncle Wiggily happened to look along the ground and what he saw caused him to grasp the paw of the polar bear and whisper:

"Look! Do you see what I see?"

"I see a toadstool hopping toward us," said Mr. Whitewash.

"Yes—that's it—a toadstool coming along all by itself!" cried Uncle Wiggily. "I never heard of nor saw such a thing before. This must be a magical or fairy island. Come on—we had better run or some enchantment spell may be cast over us. Let's run away from the walking toadstool!" and off the stump jumped the rabbit gentleman and began to hop away.

CHAPTER XIV

UNCLE WIGGILY HEARS A VOICE

MR. WHITEWASH remained on the stump a moment after Uncle Wiggily had hopped off, and the polar bear gentleman looked from the rabbit to the moving toadstool and then from the toadstool to the hopping bunny.

"I guess I'd better go, too!" growled Mr. Whitewash. "It seems as if something magical was going on here, and I don't want to be turned into a mud turtle or an angle worm!"

Off the stump jumped Mr. Whitewash, but his trousers caught on a jagged sliver and the cloth tore with a ripping sound.

"Oh, dear!" whined Mr. Whitewash, "and they are my next-to-best-trousers. It's all the fault of that magical moving toadstool!"

And then, all of a sudden, from beneath the toadstool came a jolly little laugh.

"See! I told you! Come on!" called Uncle Wiggily as he stopped running and turned to

look back at the polar bear. "Hurry! Run! There's a fairy under that toadstool!"

"I can't run—I tore my trousers!" growled the bear gentleman. "But I guess you're right about that being a fairy toadstool. It's laughing at us now!"

And then a voice cried:

"Don't be afraid, Uncle Wiggily! Don't be afraid, Mr. Whitewash! There is no fairy under this toadstool, it is only I!" and from beneath the queer plant that had kept the rain off Peetie and Kittie jumped—Baby Bunty!

For a moment Uncle Wiggily and Mr. Whitewash stood there staring at the little rabbit girl and then Mr. Longears laughed.

"So it was you, hopping along beneath the toadstool, that made it move; was it?" he asked.

"Yes!" giggled Bunty. "It was a little trick I played. I broke the handle of the toadstool umbrella off short so I could hold it close to the ground, and then I hopped along with it over my head."

"And we thought it was magical!" chuckled Uncle Wiggily. "Wasn't that funny, Mr.

Whitewash? We thought it was an enchantment! Ha! Ha!"

"Yes, but it wasn't very funny to tear my trousers," growled the polar bear gentleman, looking at the rip. "My next-to-best ones, too!"

"Oh, I'm so sorry!" said Bunty. Usually it ended this way—her tricks made trouble and she had to be sorry about them. But that did not stop her from playing a trick the next time she got the chance.

"Never mind," spoke Uncle Wiggily. "Nurse Jane will mend your trousers for you, Mr. Whitewash."

"And I scared you a little bit; didn't I?" laughed Bunty.

"Well, you made us wonder what was going to happen," said the rabbit gentleman. "I was beginning to think I was on a magical island. Now don't play any more tricks to-day, Bunty."

"All right, I won't," she promised. Then she broke off what little remained of the handle, or stem, of the toadstool, and used the circle part for a hoop to roll around the camping ground.

"Come on," invited Uncle Wiggily to Mr. Whitewash, "I'll get Nurse Jane to take a pine needle and some cobweb thread and mend that rip in your trousers. Then you'll be as good as new."

"I'll be glad of that," said the polar bear gentleman. "Very glad, indeed!"

Now while Nurse Jane, the muskrat lady housekeeper, was sewing up the rip in the trousers of the polar bear gentleman, Uncle Wiggily thought he would take a hop around Sugar Island to see if everything was all right, to make sure none of the animal boys or girls was in danger and also to think up what he was going to sing at the entertainment that evening.

"Mr. Whitewash doesn't need to think of what he is going to dance," said the rabbit gentleman to himself. "It will just come natural to him. But I must make up a funny song to amuse the kiddies. Let me see now, what shall I sing about?"

Thus thinking, Mr. Longears hopped this way and that way, and pretty soon he found himself in the woods at the far end of the

island away from his camp. It was the end of the island where the cottage stood in which lived Neil and Joan. Almost before he knew it, Uncle Wiggily was within sight of this house.

And then, all of a sudden, Uncle Wiggily heard a voice. It was the voice of an animal, for it spoke in animal language which the rabbit gentleman understood very well.

"Oh, I wish I could get out! I wish I could get out!" sighed the voice, and it was very sad. "How happy I would be if I could only get out of this cage!"

"My goodness! It has happened!" exclaimed Uncle Wiggily to himself, his pink nose twinkling very fast. "Just what Jimmie Wibblewobble said—those children, with their wooden cage, have caught one of my animal boys or girls. I wonder which one it is? I must go back and get Nurse Jane and Mr. Whitewash. They will help me rescue whoever is shut in the wooden cage which the boy and girl brought to the island. Oh, dear!"

Turning around, Uncle Wiggily hopped as fast as he could back to the camp to get help.

CHAPTER XV

NURSE JANE'S JELLY CAKE

"WHAT's the matter, Uncle Wiggily? Why does your pink nose twinkle so fast? Has anything happened? You seem very much excited!" squeaked Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy to the rabbit gentleman as he came leaping, bounding and hopping into the green, grassy forest glade where the children's camp was located. The tall, silk hat of Mr. Longears tumbled off and rolled along on the brown pine needles that were spread like a carpet on the ground.

"Excited!" cried the rabbit gentleman, "I guess you would be excited, too, if you heard what I heard!" He sat down on a green, mossy log to calm himself.

"What did you hear?" asked the muskrat lady.

"A voice," answered the bunny uncle. "A voice crying to be let out of a cage! Listen!

It was near the cottage where that boy and girl live—the boy and girl Jimmie Wibblewobble saw coming to Sugar Island in a boat! They had a wooden cage with them. Now they have caught some of the animal children and shut them in the cage. I heard the voice begging to be let out. I couldn't tell whose voice it was, though. I came to get you and Mr. Whitewash to help in the rescue. Tell me—have you sewed the polar bear gentleman's torn trousers yet?"

"Yes, I mended them."

"Good! Where is he? He must help you and me rescue whatever animal boy or girl is in the cage. Ho, Mr. Whitewash!" cried the rabbit uncle. "Where are you?"

"Coming!" answered the polar bear who had gone off behind a big tree to practice some of his dancing steps for the entertainment that evening. "Why, what's the matter?" Mr. Whitewash asked quickly, as he saw how pale Uncle Wiggily's pink nose was. "Don't tell me there is no more honey candy left!" whispered the bear.

"There is plenty of candy," Uncle Wiggily

replied, "and when that is gone I can make more from the honey the bees will give me. But this is worse than that! One of the animal boys or girls has been caught and is in a cage at the cottage," and the rabbit told about having heard the sad voice.

"We must go to the rescue—hurry!" cried Nurse Jane.

"But which of the boys or girls you brought to Sugar Island with you is missing?" asked Mr. Whitewash. "Let us be calm now. I have heard of none being caught or taken away."

"Nor I," said Nurse Jane. "And I think, Uncle Wiggily, if any of the boys or girls had been taken some of their brothers or sisters would know of it and run to tell us."

"That's so," agreed Mr. Whitewash.

"But I heard a voice begging to be let out of a cage," said Uncle Wiggily. "It was a voice speaking animal talk—I couldn't be sure whether it was a pussy cat, a dog, a rabbit or a squirrel—but it was one of our animal friends."

"The only way to be sure," said Mr. Whitewash, "is to call all the boys and girls to-

gether. Then we can count them, call the roll, as the Lady Mouse Teacher does in the Hollow Stump School, and we shall find out, in that way, who is missing. Then, when we know who is the prisoner in the cottage cage, we shall be better able to go to the rescue."

"Yes," agreed Uncle Wiggily after thinking this over a few moments, "that sounds like a good plan. But now the boys and girls are scattered all about in the forest here. How can we get them together to count them?"

"I will blow the eating whistle," said Nurse Jane.

"The eating whistle! What is that?" Uncle Wiggily wanted to know.

"Mr. Whitewash made me a whistle out of willow bark," said the muskrat lady, taking the tooter from her pocket. "I had so much trouble getting the children to wash their paws and faces before they came to the table, that I said I wished I had a bell to ring."

"So, not being able to make a bell, I made her a whistle," growled Mr. Whitewash, with a low and polite bow to Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy.

"I was going, very soon, to whistle the children back here to give them something to eat before the regular meal," went on the muskrat lady. "So I'll call them now to have some bread and jam." Putting the whistle to her lips, Miss Fuzzy Wuzzy blew a loud blast. A moment later there were joyous shouts and calls in the forest. There was a scurrying of feet and paws, a fluttering of wings and then, from North, East, West and South came hurrying the animal boys and girls who had been scattered about playing after the rain.

"What's the matter?" barked Jackie Bow Wow, "did the Police Dog blow his traffic whistle because Uncle Wiggily was hopping too fast?"

"No," answered Mr. Whitewash, "that was the bread and jam whistle which blew."

"Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurroo!" cried the children. "Hurrah for the bread and jam!"

"But there is another reason why we called you together by the whistle," said Uncle Wiggily. "Some one is missing—some one is a prisoner in the cottage cage! I want to find out who is gone so that Nurse Jane, Mr. White-

wash and I may go to the rescue. So, while you are eating the bread and jam that Miss Fuzzy Wuzzy will give you, Mr. Whitewash and I will count you."

But, strange as it seemed to Uncle Wiggily, when the roll was called, not a boy or girl animal was missing.

"They are all here," said Mr. Whitewash, scratching his nose with his paw in a puzzled fashion. "Every one is here!"

"Yes, all but my brother Sammie," said Susie. "And he is back home with father and mother."

"Yes, Sammie is home," agreed Uncle Wiggily. "Because he ran away to dance in the woods after his swim, he missed coming with the party. But that reminds me—I shall go to the main land in a day or so and get Sammie and bring him here."

"Oh, I'll be so glad!" murmured Susie, who was lonesome for her little brother.

"Then," said Nurse Jane, who had finished passing the bread and jam to the hungry little animals, "if no one is missing from our camp, no one can be a prisoner in the cage."

"It doesn't seem so," agreed Uncle Wiggily. "And yet I heard an animal voice sadly begging to be let out. I thought surely one of our children had been caught by that girl or boy."

"Perhaps what you heard was the wind, sighing and moaning in the trees," said Mr. Whitewash.

"No," answered Uncle Wiggily, shaking his head, "it wasn't the wind. But it may have been the echo of some of these children's voices as they played in the forest. Well, if no one is caught, there is no one to rescue. So run away again, my dears, and have a good time until you are called to eat once more. But don't eat too much."

"Why not?" asked Floppy Twistytail, the fat little pig boy who, with his brother Curly, seemed always hungry. "I love to eat!" he grunted.

"Well, you don't want to eat so much to-day that you can't eat anything at the party to-night," spoke Nurse Jane with a smile.

"Oh, are we going to have a party?" barked Peetie Bow Wow.

"Yes," growled Mr. Whitewash with a laugh,

"and not only will there be things to eat, but Uncle Wiggily is going to sing a song!"

"Hurrray!" cried the animal children.

"Nor is that all," said the rabbit gentleman with a smile. "Mr. Whitewash is going to dance for us."

"Hurroo!" cried all the animal children.

"Oh, don't expect too much," spoke the polar bear gentleman with a modest smile. "I am not a very good dancer as yet, but I will do my best. And now, if you will excuse me," he growled politely as he bowed, "I will go off in the woods and practice my steps."

"And I must make some jelly cake for the party this evening," squeaked Nurse Jane.

"Oh, are we going to have jelly cake? Hurrray! Hurrray! Hurrray!" cheered Curly Twistytail. "Oh, what a party that will be! What a party!" he murmured to his fat brother pig.

"I can't understand it," said Uncle Wiggily to himself as he watched the children scamper back to their play. "I feel sure I heard the voice of some little prisoner in the cottage cage. And yet all the children I brought to Sugar

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Island are here safe except Sammie Littletail, and he is back home. It is very strange!"

At the same time, in the burrow, or underground house, over on the main shore, Mr. Littletail was saying to his wife:

"Isn't it lonesome without Sammie and Susie?"

"Yes," was the reply, "but we know they are safe on Sugar Island with Uncle Wiggily. Sammie almost missed getting there, on account of dancing away after his swim, but he is there now."

And so Sammie was on Sugar Island, and not on the main shore as Uncle Wiggily supposed. Nor was he with Uncle Wiggily on the island, as his father and mother imagined. For Sammie, as we know, was shut up in the wooden cage, and it was his voice Uncle Wiggily had heard. Only the rabbit gentleman didn't know this.

And so Sammie remained in his prison, sighing and wishing he could get out to join his friends. And, all the while, his friends were making ready to have a jolly time at the party.

Uncle Wiggily was practicing singing and Mr. Whitewash was practicing dancing.

Lunch was over, and Nurse Jane had set out a light supper to be eaten by the animal boys and girls, for Uncle Wiggily said they must not have too much to eat, since there would be good things for them at the party.

"And now I can give attention to the jelly cake," squeaked Nurse Jane who was quite proud of her way of making it—not too proud, you understand, but just proud enough.

Uncle Wiggily had made a little stone stove on the camping ground, and in the oven of this stove Nurse Jane was to make the jelly cake—two cakes, in fact, one for the girls and one for the boys. Pots, pans, kettles and kitchen dishes had been brought to the island in Uncle Wiggily's motor boat, as well as flour, sugar, pepper, mustard and vinegar—you know—all the things that go to make a cake.

Nurse Jane was stirring up the cake-batter, and the glasses of jelly had been set out on a flat stump table, the fire was hot under the oven and everything was coming along nicely when,

all of a sudden, from behind the stump a hairy paw reached up and took the bowl of cake-batter right away from Nurse Jane.

“Here! None of your tricks, Mr. Whitewash!” laughed the muskrat lady. “Bring back my jelly cake-batter!”

“I’m not Mr. Whitewash!” snarled a savage voice! And then another hairy paw reached up from behind the stump and took a lot of the jelly.

“Oh! Oh!” cried Nurse Jane. “Oh, Uncle Wiggily! Come here! Hurry!”

CHAPTER XVI

THE PARTY IN THE WOODS

UNCLE WIGGILY, who was playing a game of tag with Buddy and Brighteyes, the guinea pigs, heard Nurse Jane's call for help, and, as quickly as he could he hopped toward the muskrat lady.

"What did you say was the matter?" asked the rabbit gentleman.

"Look!" squeaked Miss Fuzzy Wuzzy. She pointed to the hairy paw which, even then, was reaching up from behind the stump table, to see what other good things could be taken.

"It got my jelly cake-batter," whispered the muskrat lady.

"Ho! Ho!" suddenly laughed Uncle Wiggily. "It's only a joke!"

"A joke?" asked Nurse Jane. "What do you mean?"

"I mean that paw belongs to either Jacko or

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Jumpo Kinkytail, one of the monkey boys," said the rabbit gentleman. "They are only playing a trick on you."

Just then Jackie Bow Wow ran to where Mr. Longears stood and whined softly, as though he had a secret he wanted to tell.

"What is it, Jackie?" asked the bunny of the little dog boy.

"That hairy paw doesn't belong to Jacko or Jumpo," softly barked Jackie. "It belongs to the Bob Cat. I saw him creep up to the stump out of the woods and he's hiding there. I saw his silly little tail. He took Nurse Jane's cake-batter and he'll take your ears if he gets the chance, Uncle Wiggily!"

"Oh, so it's the Bob Cat; is it?" murmured the bunny.

But the bad chap, for he it was, never got the chance to nibble the rabbit's ears. For just then Billie and Johnnie Bushytail, the squirrels, came scampering out of the woods. They saw the Bob Cat hiding behind the stump, getting ready to eat Nurse Jane's jelly cake-batter, and the jelly, too, but before Mr. Bob Cat could take even a small taste, Johnnie and Billie be-

gan throwing at him some hard acorn nuts they had picked up under an oak tree.

"Wow! Zowzie! Ow!" howled the bad chap as the acorns hit him on the nose and banged his eyes. "Oh, this is no place for me! This must be a hard rain storm—hail, too, I guess! I'd better go away and come back another time!"

Dropping the glass of jelly and also the bowl of cake-batter, the Bob Cat ran away, followed by more acorns which Johnnie and Billie threw after him.

"Good, my brave squirrels!" exclaimed Uncle Wiggily when he saw what Billie and Johnnie had done. "It's lucky I didn't try to go close to those hairy paws, thinking they belonged to Jacko and Jumbo Kinkytail. Very lucky, indeed. And now, Nurse Jane, you may go on with your cake baking."

Which the muskrat lady did, while Uncle Wiggily played with the animal children until it was time for the party.

The moon came out from behind the clouds, shining brightly down through the trees on Sugar Island. In a little glade, or grass-

covered clearing, with the trees and bushes in a sort of fairy ring around them, gathered Uncle Wiggily, Nurse Jane, Mr. Whitewash and all the boy and girl animals.

"Oh, how I do wish Sammie were here!" whispered Susie to her friend Alice Wibblewobble, as the party was about to begin.

"Yes, it's going to be lovely," quacked the duck girl. "But Uncle Wiggily will have another party, maybe, and Sammie can come to that after he gets to Sugar Island."

"Yes, I hope he can," sighed Susie.

Then the party began. I wish you could have been there, but of course that isn't allowed so I shall tell you about it.

First of all the animal children sang some songs, led by Nurse Jane. What matter if Nurse Jane's voice squeaked a little? All muskrat ladies voices squeak. And it didn't matter that Jackie Bow Wow sang the third verse of the song when all the others were singing the second verse. That only made it the more jolly.

Susie Littletail got up to recite a piece, but instead of saying "Once a trap was baited with



a piece of cheese," the little rabbit girl recited: "Once a mouse was cheesing, with a bite of trap!"

"Oh, Ha! Ha!" laughed Uncle Wiggily. "That's the funniest piece I ever heard! Say some more, Susie!" So Susie recited the whole verse backward, as she had started, and very well she did it.

After that Jackie and Peetie Bow Wow jumped over each other's backs, and stood on their heads, as they used to do in the circus which they had run away and joined when they were little puppies. "And now Mr. Whitewash is going to dance for us," called Uncle Wiggily.

"Oh, I don't want to," rumbled the polar bear gentleman, sort of bashful like as he swayed from side to side.

"But you must!" said Nurse Jane. "You have been practicing your dance-steps in the woods, and you do them very well. Come now, dance for the children."

"Yes, please dance for us!" cried the animal boys and girls.

"Oh,—all right!" rumbled Mr. Whitewash.

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So out he lumbered to the middle of the grassy glade and there he danced while Bunny and Brighteyes, the guinea pigs whistled. Up and down danced the bear gentleman, forward and back and through the middle. Then, all of a sudden, when he was doing a funny step on one toe-nail, his paw slipped on a wet leaf and down he went ker-floppo!

"Oh! Oh! Oh! How funny!" laughed the animal boys and girls.

"Yes," said Uncle Wiggily to Mr. Whitewash as the bear went back to his seat on the stump, "You did that last step very well."

"That wasn't part of the dance—it was a mistake! I didn't mean to fall!" whispered the bear.

"Well, you did it very well!" laughed Mr. Longears. "Don't tell anyone and they'll think you meant to do it!"

So Mr. Whitewash pretended that his fall was just what he intended doing and it was quite a success, everyone said.

"And now Uncle Wiggily is going to sing for us," called Nurse Jane.

"I'll do my best," promised the rabbit who

wanted the animal boys and girls to have fun at his evening party on Sugar Island. "But I must have some one to play for me," said the rabbit.

"I'll play for you," offered Baby Bunty. "I'll play tag for you, Uncle Wiggily!"

"No! No! I don't mean that kind of play!" laughed the rabbit gentleman. "I want some one to play music while I sing."

"We'll play for you!" murmured some small voices down in the grass, and out hopped some black crickets.

"The very thing!" exclaimed Mr. Longears. And while the crickets perched themselves up on a little stump and cheerfully chirped, Uncle Wiggily sang this song about himself:

Uncle Wiggily lived inside a stump.
One day his heart beat thumpy-bump!
He heard a knock upon his door,
And said: "The Fox is here once more!"

"What do you want?" the bunny cried.
"You can't get me—I'm safe inside!"
"I want your ears!" the old Fox said.
"I'll nibble them—right off your head!"

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The bunny laughed and quickly cried:
"Watch out, old Fox! You'd better hide!"
Then something hit the Fox so savage,
But it was—just a head of cabbage!

Oh, my goodness! You should have heard the animal boys and girls laugh when Uncle Wiggily made a funny little bow and sat down after his song. Such jolly laughter as it was!

"Good for you, Uncle Wiggily!" shouted Billie Wagtail, the goat.

"And bad for the Fox!" croaked Bully the frog.

"I guess his nose hurt him when that cabbage Uncle Wiggily threw at him hit the Fox on the head!" quacked Jimmie the duck.

And then the party went on in a more jolly way than ever. There were other songs and games, and Uncle Wiggily told a Bedtime Story. Then Nurse Jane brought out the good things to eat, and there was plenty of jelly-cake for every one.

And suddenly, when the last of the good things had been eaten, Uncle Wiggily lifted up one ear, listened carefully to something he seemed to hear in the distant wood, and then

the rabbit whispered: "Quick—everybody—away to your hiding places! To your beds in the hollow trees and stumps! To your little nooks under the rocks and dried leaves! Some one is coming!"

"Maybe it's my brother Sammie!" said Susie.

"No it is none of our kind—no animal folk!" said Uncle Wiggily who had very sharp ears, as well as long. "It is a boy and a girl—real children! Quick! Hide before they see us!"

CHAPTER XVII

BABES IN THE WOOD

SUCH a scurrying as there was among the animal boys and girls who had been having so much jolly fun at Uncle Wiggily's woodland party! The dried leaves rustled under their feet and paws as they sought hiding places.

"I'm glad this didn't happen before the party," softly crowed Charlie, the rooster boy, to his sister Arabella.

"Yes," cackled the little hen girl. "That would have been too bad!"

"Do you really think any one is coming?" croaked Bully the frog.

"Yes—I see them!" whined Jackie Bow Wow. Turning to look back as they sped away to hide, the animals saw a boy and girl walking slowly into the glade which was now almost as bright as day from the rays of the silvery, shining moon.

"I'm not going a step farther, Neil!" sighed

the little girl. "I just can't!" and she sat down on a mossy log.

"Why not?" asked the brother, for it was the brother and sister children, from the cottage at the other end of the island who had come to the party glade. "Why can't you walk any more, Joan?"

"Because I'm so tired!" was the little girl's answer! "We're lost and you know we're lost and there's no use keeping on any farther and getting more lost! We might as well stay here and rest."

"Yes, I guess we're lost all right," said the boy Neil. "And it's too bad you're tired. It's all my fault, Joan."

"No, it's partly mine, because I wanted you to come to this end of the island to see if we could catch any more animals to put in our wooden cage," said the girl. "It's as much my fault as yours. But aren't you tired, too?"

"Not so very," murmured Neil. But Uncle Wiggily and the others who were watching, hidden behind stumps, stones and clumps of grass, saw the boy sit down on the mossy log beside his sister.

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"If we only had something to eat it wouldn't be so bad," went on the little girl. "Oh, but I'm so hungry! It's terrible to be lost and hungry at the same time; isn't it!"

"The poor little child," murmured Nurse Jane to Uncle Wiggily. "If I had known they were coming we might have left some of our party good things for them to nibble at!" But all the cake and goodies had been eaten, and when the little animals scurried away they took with them all the dishes used at the party so there was nothing for Neil and Joan to see, much less to eat.

"Oh, I'm so hungry!" murmured the little girl again.

Then Uncle Wiggily and the others, watching, saw Neil put his hand in his pocket and they heard him give a joyful cry.

"Oh, Joan! Look!" he exclaimed. "Cookies! I just happened to think of them. I put them in my pocket after we had supper at the cottage. We can eat these and we won't be hungry any more."

"Oh, Neil! How nice!" said his sister.

"They're the big molasses cookies, too! The kind I like best!"

Then, sitting on the green, mossy log in the moonlight, Neil and Joan ate the cookies and felt much happier.

"I can guess what happened," whispered Uncle Wiggily to Mr. Whitewash, who was hiding with the rabbit behind a big stump. "These children started out after supper to take a walk in the woods. They wandered far from their cottage home and now they are lost in our party glade. They don't know we are here but we know they are."

"Yes," agreed Mr. Whitewash, "and did you hear what they said about coming to look for more animals to put in their trap cage? I hope they don't catch me!"

"Ha! Ha!" silently laughed Uncle Wiggily. "It would take to hold you, my polar bear friend, a much larger and stronger cage than these children could make. But I wonder what animal it is they have in their cage up at the cottage? First I thought it was one of my little boys or girls, but I know where they all

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are—those that aren't here on Sugar Island are safe at home—where Sammie Littletail is. I wonder who is in that cage?"

"I'm sure I don't know," growled Mr. White-wash.

Well might the bunny and the bear wonder. Little did they dream that it was poor Sammie Littletail in the children's cage. But Sammie well knew, himself, that he was a prisoner.

Just as Uncle Wiggily had guessed, from hearing Neil and Joan talk, the children had started from their cottage, after supper, to wander in the woods.

"And now we are lost," sighed Joan when she had eaten her share of the molasses cookies. "Where can we stay all night, Neil? We can't find our way back home, for we have tried, and each time we only got more lost. What can we do?"

"We must stay here all night, I guess, Joan," answered the boy.

"Like the babes in the wood?" asked Joan.

"Yes, like the babes in the wood. See, here are plenty of leaves we can cover ourselves with. We will lie down beside this big log.

Don't be afraid—nothing will harm us, and in the morning daddy or mother will come for us.”

“That will be nice,” sleepily murmured Joan. “And in the morning maybe we can find our own way home.”

So, just like the babes in the forest, the little boy and girl lay down in the silvery moonlight, beside the mossy log, covering themselves with dried leaves. And when they were asleep Uncle Wiggily softly called together the animal boys and girls who brought more leaves—large, green ones from the trees—spreading them so gently over Joan and Neil that the brother and sister never awakened.

“There—they'll be all right,” said Mr. Longears as he waved his paw to tell his little friends to go to their own beds in hollow stumps and logs. “They'll be all right until morning. But I wish I knew,” said the old rabbit gentleman to himself, twinkling his pink nose, “I wish I knew what animal is in the cage up at the cottage!” Then Mr. Longears went to sleep.

CHAPTER XVIII

SAMMIE GETS OUT

HAD Uncle Wiggily asked his question of Sammie Littletail, that little rabbit boy could have told the old bunny gentleman who was shut up in the wooden cage at the cottage. For it was Sammie himself.

“And I wonder if I shall ever get out?” thought Sammie on the evening of Uncle Wiggily’s party. “Once I was almost out but I didn’t get free. I wonder if it is worth while to try again?”

Though Neil and Joan were very kind to Sammie, still the bunny boy, even though his cage was safe, snug and warm, and even though he never had so many good things to eat in all his life—still, in spite of this, Sammie wanted to go free. He did not like being shut up a prisoner. Kindness could never make up for that.

So when, after supper, Neil and Joan came

out on the cottage porch to feed Sammie, the little rabbit boy looked as sad as he could.

"For if I seem unhappy they may let me go," he thought.

But Neil and his sister did not know much about rabbits or other animals. At least they did not know how to tell the difference between a happy bunny and a sad one. All the children knew was that bunnies were soft and lovable, and that the long-eared pets liked to eat cabbage, lettuce and carrots.

So, as Joan thrust bits of lettuce into Sammie's cage she said to her brother:

"Wouldn't it be fine if we could get another rabbit to keep with this one?"

"That would be great!" exclaimed Neil. "Or even a squirrel. I'll tell you what we can do! Let's go to the other end of the island where it's wilder than it is here. Maybe we can catch some other animal to put in the cage with this one."

"All right!" agreed Joan, and so that's how the children started on their trip. And it was on this trip that they became lost.

"I hope they don't catch any more poor bun-

nies or squirrels, either," thought Sammie, as the shadows of evening grew darker and longer. "I'd like some company all right, but not in this cage. Oh, I wish I could get out!"

And then a queer thing happened. Sammie was pushing with his little pink, twinkling nose near the door of his cage, through which Joan had thrust some cabbage leaves when, all of a sudden the little rabbit boy felt the door opening!

"Oh, what is going to happen?" he whispered to himself.

He pushed harder—again and again! The door opened wider! Joan, in putting in the bunny's food, had loosened the catch, though she did not know it.

"Oh! Oh!" softly murmured Sammie, trembling with excitement and hope. "I believe—I believe I am going to get out at last!"

The door was open a little way now. Through the gathering darkness Sammie could see a way to freedom. Joan and Neil had gone off down the island path. Sammie had heard their voices as they wandered farther and farther

away. Now he could no longer hear nor could he see the boy and girl.

"I can get out! Oh, I can get out!" joyfully whispered Sammie.

Again he pushed on the door of his cage. It opened wider—wide enough for the little, furry body of the rabbit to push its way out.

A moment later Sammie was on the porch floor. His cage was behind him. No one was in sight. In the cottage the father and mother of Joan and Neil were reading, and thinking it was about time the children came in.

"I'm free!" thought Sammie, his heart beating very fast. "I'm out of the cage! Now I'll go find Uncle Wiggily and the others!"

As softly as a shadow of the night he bounded away through the bushes and trees of the forest on Sugar Island.

CHAPTER XIX

BAD LUCK

NEVER had Sammie Littletail been so happy in all his short life—not even as he first went adventuring with Uncle Wiggily when the old rabbit gentleman lived in the hollow stump bungalow.

“For I am free!” joyfully cried Sammie, speaking in rabbit talk, of course. “I am no longer a prisoner! I am free!”

Freedom is one of the greatest things in the world. If you don’t believe it just shut yourself up in a dark closet sometime, and stay there all day and night, and then see how glad you will be when the door opens and you can walk out!

“I thought I would never escape, but I did!” murmured the little rabbit boy. “And now the next thing to do is to find Uncle Wiggily and my friends who are here on Sugar Island—Susie and the others. I know they must be

here for they said they were coming, and I would have come with them only I was so silly as to go dancing off by myself in the woods after my swim, and I was caught."

On the soft breezes of the moonlight night there came to the nose of Sammie many smells. Some he knew very well—the odor of green leaves, of damp moss, of wet bark of the trees, the smell of things he knew were good to eat.

"And I can also smell rabbits and squirrels and guinea pigs and dogs and cats," said Sammie to himself, for each of these animals has an odor of its own and other wild folk know their kind as well as they know the smells that tell them of danger from the Fox, the Wolf or the Bob Cat.

Without knowing it, and without intending it, Sammie had darted off the cottage porch and was now headed straight for the little grassy glade where the party had been held, and around which, in hollow stumps, logs and other places, were sleeping Uncle Wiggily and his friends.

"Yes, indeed," murmured the little escaped prisoner to himself, "I smell rabbits and other

animal folk—I know I am soon going to be with my friends. Oh, how happy I am now!”

But Sammie knew he must be careful, hopping through the dark, strange woods all alone. Had he been on the main land, where Uncle Wiggily’s hollow stump bungalow stood, Sammie would have felt more at home. He was a stranger on Sugar Island, but still the woods were much like the woods on the main shore, and Sammie must use the same care going along here as he would use at home.

“I don’t want the Wolf or Bob Cat to catch me!” thought the little rabbit boy. “And I don’t want old Silent Wings, the owl, to swoop down and grab me in his claws.”

So Sammie slunk along, under the edge of this bush, in the shadow of that rock and behind the big trees which cast their long shadows from the moon upon the floor of the forest.

Once, as Sammie bounded across a little open space a great owl, named Silent Wings by the woodland folk, because he flew so quietly—once Silent Wings made a downward swoop from the limb of a tree where he was perched.

"There is my supper—that rabbit!" hooted Silent Wings.

But Sammie, with a frightened little squeak, leaped beneath a thick bush where the owl's claws could not grab him.

Again, as Sammie bounded along, he caught the smell of the Fuzzy Fox. The Fox was prowling around looking for something to eat, and he would ask nothing better than a rabbit for his midnight supper.

"Snap!" went the jaws of the Fox, as he saw Sammie on the moonlight path. But Sammie, for once, was quicker than the Fox, and made a dash beneath a pile of bramble briars which offered a safe place for him. The brambles were too thick, scratchy and prickly for the Fox to dare venture in. But Sammie was so small he managed to squeeze beneath them without getting his fur caught.

"Ha! That was a narrow escape!" murmured Sammie, his breath coming in gasps and his heart beating fast.

"I'll get you next time," snarled the disappointed Fox, gnashing his teeth. He waited around the bramble pile, but Sammie knew

better than to come out, and, after a while, the Fox caught the smell of a mouse running along the forest path, and away slunk the sly chap to try for a mouse evening meal. I don't know whether or not Mr. Fox caught the mouse.

Waiting until he was sure it was safe, Sammie crept out from the brambles and kept on his way toward the place whence came the smells that told him his friends were near.

Though he could not see them, and, in fact, had never been in this place before, Sammie could tell, by the smells, that rabbits, dogs, cats, ducks and guinea pigs had been playing around in the grassy glade. For he now stood in the middle of the forest clearing where Uncle Wiggily had given his party.

"I wonder what that pile is, over by the log?" said Sammie to himself as he stood on the edge of the clearing. "Oh, I see," he went on as the moon came out from behind some clouds and shone more brightly. "It is a pile of leaves. I guess Uncle Wiggily and the others are camping out under those leaves instead of a tent. I'll give them a surprise. I'll jump right on them."

So Sammie jumped on the pile of leaves, but instead of giving a surprise he had a surprise of his own. Though, in a way, Neil and Joan—who were asleep under the leaves, like the babes in the wood—Joan and Neil were also surprised. Quickly they awakened as Sammie jumped on them.

“Oh, Neil!” cried Joan. “What is it?”

“It’s a rabbit—that’s what it is!” cried Neil, sitting up and scattering aside the dried leaves and the green ones that covered him and his sister. “A rabbit and I’ve caught it!”

For before Sammie, after seeing what a mistake he had made, could jump away, Neil had caught the bunny in his hands.

“Oh, what bad luck!” sighed poor Sammie. “Caught again and by the same boy who caught me before! Oh, what bad luck!”

But Joan thought differently.

“Oh, what good luck!” cried the little girl, clapping her hands. “We’ve caught another rabbit to go with the one we have in the cage; haven’t we, Neil? We came to get another rabbit and we have it!”

“No,” answered her brother slowly, as he

looked at Sammie in the bright moonlight, "this is our same rabbit. He must have gotten out of the cage."

"And he came right back to us—how funny!" laughed Joan. "He must like us, Neil!"

"Yes, I guess he does," said the little boy. "Anyhow, we like him, though it's queer how he got out and found us," and he cuddled Sammie in his arms and stroked the soft fur of the bunny.

Sammie liked to be treated with kindness, but he wished he had not jumped on that pile of leaves to be caught again.

"The rabbit found us," said Joan, "but I wish we could find our house, or that mother or father would find us."

Hardly had she spoken than through the forest echoed a cry:

"Neil! Joan! Where are you?"

"That's daddy!" cried the little girl.

"Here we are!" shouted Neil, and a little later his father and mother, who had missed the children, and gone in search of them, came into the clearing.

The babes in the wood had been found, which was good luck for them. But Sammie was again a prisoner, which was bad luck for him. So it goes in this world.

CHAPTER XX

UNCLE WIGGILY GOES TO SHORE

"WHAT in the world were you children trying to do—run away?" asked Mr. Chadwick with a laugh as Joan and Neil ran to him and their mother across the moonlight glade.

"We got lost," explained Joan, "and all we had to eat was some molasses cookies. But we had a nice bed in the leaves."

"Oh, my poor little lost ones!" murmured their mother. "I am so glad we have found you! I was so worried!"

"Your rabbit is lost, too," said Mr. Chadwick. "You must have left the cage open when you fed him last, for he is gone. The cage was empty when we started out, a little while ago, to look for you. Your bunny is lost."

"No, we have found him!" exclaimed Neil, holding Sammie up in his arms. "Look!"

"He came right to where we were sleeping under the leaves," explained Joan. "I guess

he loves us a lot, don't you guess so, Mother?"

"He must—to come to you the way he did," was the answer.

"It is very strange," declared Mr. Chadwick. "I never heard of a rabbit coming back after he ran away. Are you sure this is the same one, Neil?"

"Oh, yes, Daddy! I can tell by his fur."

"Well, come along back home, it's time you were in your real beds and not in one of leaves," said Mother Chadwick.

"Oh, dear!" sighed Joan. "I'm so tired! I can never walk all the way back home! It must be a hundred miles!"

"Oh, no!" laughed her father. "Hardly half a mile. But it seems like a long way to you, for you must have wandered around a great deal in the forest—probably you walked more than a mile, twisting and turning—but you are really quite close to the cottage."

"I'm glad of that," said Neil.

Holding Sammie in his arms, the little boy turned to go with his parents and sister back home. But the little rabbit made up his mind to call out for help—in his own way, of course.

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So he called, as loudly as he could:

“Help! Help! Oh, won’t somebody please help me! Uncle Wiggily, wherever you are—help me!”

“What a funny noise that rabbit is making,” said Mrs. Chadwick.

“Yes, I guess he is hungry,” said Neil.

But it wasn’t hunger that made Sammie call out in animal talk—language that only animal folk can understand. You and I could make nothing of it. No, it wasn’t hunger that caused Sammie to call—it was fear and a wish to be rescued.

And, as it happened, Uncle Wiggily and Nurse Jane were awake and heard Sammie’s calls—only they did not know who it was, for Sammie did not think to give his own name.

“Did you hear that, Uncle Wiggily?” called the muskrat lady from one side of the path where she was sleeping in a hollow tree with the girl animals near her.

“Yes, I heard it,” answered Mr. Longears. “I heard some one cry for help. And I heard man talk and woman talk and boy and girl talk. It must be the people from the cottage coming

after their children whom we covered with leaves. I'll look."

Getting out of his bed in a hollow stump, Uncle Wiggily looked and saw the Chadwick family going off through the moonlight, back home. But Uncle Wiggily could not see Sammie, because the little rabbit was snuggled in Neil's arms.

"They must have caught some little animal who knows me," thought Uncle Wiggily. "My name was called. But I don't know who can need help. None of the animal boys or girls I brought to Sugar Island is caught. I can't understand it," and the rabbit gentleman turned to go back to his bed.

"That sounded just like my brother Sammie's voice," said Susie, who had been awakened by the commotion.

"It couldn't be," said Uncle Wiggily. "Sammie is safe on shore with your father and mother. But as long as I am going to bring him here to Sugar Island I might as well go and get him. I'll go to shore, to the main land, tomorrow morning, and get Sammie. He will like it here."

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So the next morning Uncle Wiggily got ready his motor boat made from a wash-tub, with plush seats, and set sail for shore. He left Mr. Whitewash and Nurse Jane in charge of the camp on Sugar Island.

"Tell Sammie I missed him very much," called Susie, waving her paw in farewell to Mr. Longears as he started from the island.

"I will," answered the rabbit gentleman. "I'll tell Sammie."

And, all the while, Sammie was right there on the island. Only now he was once more a prisoner in the wooden cage. Joan and Neil put him back, and made fast the door.

"You can't get out again!" said the boy.

"No," sadly thought Sammie, "I guess I'll never get out again! I'll never see my father or mother, or Susie or Uncle Wiggily or any of my friends any more! Oh, dear!" And if Sammie had been a real boy he would have cried, I am sure.

Uncle Wiggily made a safe voyage to shore and soon was at the Littletail burrow home.

"Why, hello, Uncle Wiggily!" greeted Mr. Littletail who was just going to work in the cab-

bage patch. "How are Sammie and Susie enjoying their stay on Sugar Island with you?"

"Susie is having a fine time," answered the rabbit gentleman. "But she is lonesome for Sammie, so I have come to take him back to the island with me."

"Take Sammie with you?" cried Mrs. Littletail who came out of the kitchen with her apron on, for she was washing the breakfast dishes. "Why, Sammie is on the island now! He went there after he ran away from the swimming hole. Sammie is on Sugar Island!"

"Why—no—he isn't" said Uncle Wiggily. "That is—unless——"

The rabbit gentleman stopped speaking and began to twinkle his pink nose faster than ever, in all his life, he had twinkled it before.

CHAPTER XXI

A COUNCIL OF WAR

"LOOK here, Uncle Wiggily! Look here!" cried Mr. Littletail. Not that he had anything for the bunny gentleman to see, but that was just his way of speaking. "Look here!" he cried, for the third time. "You don't mean to say you have let anything happen to Sammie after you took him to Sugar Island with you? You don't mean to say the Fuzzy Fox or the Bob Cat has caught Sammie; do you?"

"No, I don't mean to say that, for it isn't true," answered Uncle Wiggily, with a puzzled look on his face, while his pink nose still kept twinkling very fast. "I didn't take Sammie to Sugar Island with me."

"No, he didn't—that's true," exclaimed Mrs. Littletail. "Don't you remember, my dear," she said to her husband, "Sammie went swimming to get clean to go with Uncle Wiggily to the island?"

"Yes, I remember that," said Sammie's father.

"And then," went on Mrs. Littletail, "instead of Sammie coming home after his bath, to go with the island excursion party, he went dancing off in the woods by himself, leaving his clothes on the bank near the swimming hole."

"True enough!" murmured Mr. Littletail.

"And after that," said Sammie's mother, "I went to the swimming place, but Sammie's clothes were gone. And I thought, all the while, that he had come back, put them on and had gone over to the island," she finished.

"That's what we thought," added the daddy rabbit.

"No, neither Sammie nor his clothes reached Sugar Island," spoke Uncle Wiggily. "At least I haven't seen them, though I am quite sure Sammie is over there."

"But I thought you said he wasn't with you!" exclaimed Mrs. Littletail, in surprise.

"He isn't," was the old rabbit gentleman's reply. "It sounds like a puzzle, but, really, it

is very simple. Sammie is in a cage on Sugar Island!"

"In a cage!" cried the rabbit boy's father.

"On Sugar Island!" echoed his mother.

"This is the way it must have happened," went on Mr. Longears. "Sammie was caught by the boy and girl who are living in the cottage on one end of the island. Some of the animal children saw them arrive in a boat and in the boat was a wooden cage with some animal in. At the time none of us guessed it was Sammie, for we thought he was safe on shore here with you."

"And all the while we have been thinking he was with you," said Mr. Littletail.

"Yes, it has been a mistake all around," admitted Uncle Wiggily. "But we shall soon change that."

"Are you sure our Sammie is in the children's cage?" asked the bunny boy's mother, anxiously.

"Quite sure," answered Mr. Longears. "As sure as I need be. I heard some little animal calling to be let out of a cage when I was near the cottage the other day. Only last night the boy and girl were lost in the moonlight glade



"Sammie is on Sugar Island!"

where I gave a party. Before their father and mother found them and took them home, the children had caught some animal who called to me for help.

"But as all the boys and girls I had brought to Sugar Island were safe with me and Nurse Jane, and as I thought Sammie was with you, why I never even dreamed that it was Sammie calling. But now I am sure it was."

"Yes, it must have been," sadly said Mrs. Littletail. "But how are we going to rescue the poor boy?"

"I have a plan," said Uncle Wiggily. "You two must come back to Sugar Island with me. Susie will be glad to see you, for she has been lonesome for Sammie. Just as I did—as we all did, in fact—she thought he was over here."

"It is very strange," murmured the rabbit lady.

"Never mind about that!" cried her husband, who was very business-like. "Let us make haste! On to Sugar Island to rescue Sammie!"

"That's the way to talk!" exclaimed Uncle Wiggily. "Come! my boat is waiting! We shall soon be there!"

It did not take very long to make the journey back to Sugar Island. Susie saw the floating wash-tub when it was yet some distance away.

"Did you bring Sammie?" asked the little rabbit girl, hopping down to the shore, waving her paw and jiggling her short tail.

"No," answered Uncle Wiggily. "Sammie wasn't there. He is here."

Then Susie saw her mother and father and she feared something had happened to her brother, until the voyagers came ashore and told the strange story.

"So that's how it happened!" growled Mr. Whitewash, the polar bear gentleman, at the end of the tale. "Sammie is a prisoner in the cage at the cottage. Come, we'll go there and get him!"

"Stop! Wait a minute!" called Uncle Wiggily, catching hold of the bear's coat. "Don't go to the cottage in such a hurry. That man may have a gun and shoot if he sees a bear coming. First we must have a Council of War!"

"What's a Council of War?" barked Jackie Bow Wow. "Is it something good to eat?"

"I hope it is!" whined his brother Peetie. .
"I'm hungry!"

"No, a Council of War is nothing like that," said Uncle Wiggily. "It means that we must sit down and talk quietly about the best way to get Sammie away from these people. We are not strong enough to go boldly up and take him away. We must do it by a trick. Now all think hard! Attention, everybody! This is the Council of War!" and Uncle Wiggily knocked with a stick on top of a flat stump the way the Lady Mouse Teacher in the Hollow Stump School tapped with her pencil when she wanted the animal pupils to be quiet.

CHAPTER XXII

MR. WHITEWASH TO THE RESCUE

SITTING on the ground, in a half circle in front of Uncle Wiggily, were all the animal boys and girls he had brought to Sugar Island with him. On one end of the half circle was Susie Littletail and her father and mother. The rabbit girl sat close to them. She had cried a little after hearing the news about her brother, but her mother had whispered to her that Uncle Wiggily would surely find some way to get Sammie out of the cage. At the other end of the half circle was Curly Twistytail the piggie boy.

"Now then," went on Mr. Longears, and this time his pink nose twinkled more slowly, for he was thinking hard, "now then, has any one any plan by which we can save Sammie? I have one of my own, but perhaps some of you has a better idea."

Jackie Bow Wow raised his paw, as if he were in school.

"Well, Jackie?" asked the bunny gentleman, as the Mouse Teacher might have squeaked.

"Please," whined Jackie, "my brother Peetie and I will go to that cottage and bark as hard as we can. The people will come running out to see what the noise is about, and while Peetie pretends to bite them I will rush in and save Sammie."

"Good! Good!" squeaked Nurse Jane.

"Good as far as it goes, yes," said Uncle Wiggily. "But I am afraid, Jackie, that the cage in which Sammie is a prisoner will be too heavy for Peetie to carry away."

"Then let Billie and me go along and gnaw the cage open!" chattered Johnnie Bushytail, the squirrel. "With our sharp, strong teeth, that can gnaw hickory nuts, we can easily free Sammie."

"Good! Good!" growled Mr. Whitewash.

"Good as far as it goes," said Uncle Wiggily. "But while Johnnie and Billie were gnawing open the wooden cage, the man and woman, to

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say nothing of the boy and girl, might get sticks and stones and throw them at the squirrels and dogs. Or, what is worse, they might even try to capture Johnnie and Billie and Jackie and Peetie and shut them up in cages."

"Not so good!" growled the polar bear.

"Has anyone else anything else to tell this Council of War?" asked Uncle Wiggily.

"Please," quacked Lulu the duck.

"Well, what is it?" asked Mr. Longears.

"Get the circus elephant here," suggested Lulu, "and have him squirt a lot of water out of his trunk on the cottage. The people in it will think it is raining, and they will run out and maybe bring Sammie in his cage with them. We can be waiting and we'll all holler 'boo!' at them as loud as anything."

"Well, what then?" asked Uncle Wiggily, for Lulu had stopped quacking.

"Oh, yes, I almost forgot," went on the duck girl. "Well, when they rush out with Sammie in the cage, and we holler 'Boo!' at them they will drop the cage—whoever is holding it will, I mean—and it will fall and smash and

Sammie can get out and run to us and be saved."

"Good! Good!" growled Mr. Whitewash.

"Good as far as it goes," said Uncle Wiggily, "but it doesn't go far enough—that plan doesn't. In the first place we have no time to send to the circus to borrow the elephant. He is very busy now, doing tricks in the show. And if the boy or girl rushed out with Sammie in the cage and dropped it, why, Sammie might be hurt."

"Oh, don't let that happen!" cried Susie.

"I didn't think of that," quacked Lulu. "I guess somebody else had better say something."

"Has anyone a plan?" asked the rabbit uncle, and when no one rose to speak Uncle Wiggily said:

"Well, this is my plan. It is made up, in part, from what all the others said, which should be the case in a Council of War. Now, then, listen to me!"

They all listened very carefully.

"We shall get Mr. Whitewash to save Sammie," said the bunny.

"What! Me? How can I save that rabbit?"

asked the polar bear in surprise. "I thought you said the man with a gun might shoot me."

"Yes, he might if he saw you," said Uncle Wiggily. "But he will not see you."

"If he doesn't see me, how am I to go up to the cottage and get the cage with Sammie in?" Mr. Whitewash wanted to know. "Have you an invisible cloak for me, such as I have read of in fairy stories?"

"There will be no need of an invisible cloak," answered the rabbit gentleman with a smile. "Go just as you are. But when you get to the cottage no one will be there but Sammie in his cage. With your strong claws you can either open the cage, or smash it, and Sammie can get out. Then he will be saved!"

"But I don't understand," growled the bear gentleman. "How can you manage it so I can get to the cottage when no one is there but Sammie. I have wandered past the cottage many times in the last few days—before I knew Sammie was there—and each time I have seen either the boy or girl or their father or mother."

"Listen!" said Uncle Wiggily. "This is my plan. All of us, except Mr. Whitewash, will

go quietly around to the shore of the lake in front of the cottage. When we are there we will make all the noise we can. There will be barks, grunts, squeals, quacks, whistles and other noises—each one will make his or her own particular kind of sound.

“The people in the cottage—both the father and mother and the girl and boy—will rush out to see what is going on. That will leave the house clear for Mr. Whitewash. He can be hiding behind the cottage, slip in quickly when no one is there and get Sammie out of the cage. How is that for a plan?”

“Good! Very good!” cried the bear gentleman himself. “Good as far as it goes and it goes quite far enough,” he added. “I am ready to start to the rescue! Go ahead, Uncle Wig-gily. Take them all to the shore in front of the cottage. I will linger behind and, when all is clear, I will rush in and save Sammie. On to the rescue!” and Mr. Whitewash stood up on his back legs, waving his big paws, looking very brave and strong.

CHAPTER XXIII

SAMMIE IS SAVED

NOTHING so exciting and adventurous had ever before come into the lives of the animal boys and girls on Sugar Island. True they had often been with Uncle Wiggily when that rabbit gentleman saved himself and them from the Fox, Wolf or Bob Cat.

"But this is different," said Jackie Bow Wow to his brother Peetie as they trotted along side by side, on a path in the woods.

"Yes," agreed Peetie, "this is more fun than when you and I ran away and joined the circus."

"Are you afraid, Susie?" asked Baby Bunty of the little rabbit sister of the prisoner Sammie.

"No, not very," Susie answered. "I guess Uncle Wiggily knows what to do. I only hope we can rescue Sammie."

"Yes, so do I," murmured her mother who, with Mr. Littletail, was going to the lake shore

in front of the cottage to help make the queer noises.

Uncle Wiggily, like a soldier general, was leading his army of animal boys and girls, together with Mr. and Mrs. Littletail, through the forest, toward that end of Sugar Island where stood the cottage. It was the only cottage on the island, so there could be no mistake.

"And to think," said Uncle Wiggily to Mr. Littletail, as they hopped along together, "to think that Sammie has been there all this time, a prisoner in that cage, and I never knew it!"

"I only hope that boy and girl were kind to him," said Sammie's father.

"Oh, I am sure they were," said Mr. Longears. "They did not look like children who would be unkind to animals. I am quite certain Sammie was well cared for, and had plenty to eat and drink. But of course he was shut up in a cage, and that is terrible!"

It did not take long for the marching animals to reach the shore of the lake in front of the cottage. Looking through the trees, Uncle Wiggily could see the little house. He could also see, sitting on the porch, the boy and girl

and the father and mother. Uncle Wiggily had crept on ahead, through the bushes, to take a look.

"Everything is ready for our trick," he said to Mr. and Mrs. Littletail, and his other friends. "Take your places now, and when I twinkle my pink nose, be ready to make all the noises you can. Bark, mew, cackle, crow, quack, growl and whine."

"Shall we squeal?" asked Curly Twistytail, the pig who stood beside his fat little brother Floppy.

"Yes, indeed, squeal as loudly as you can," advised Uncle Wiggily. "I am glad you piggies are with us," he added, "for nothing makes more noise than a squealing pig."

"Oh, yes, I know something that makes more noise than a squealing pig," said Baby Bunty.

"What does, my dear?" asked Uncle Wiggily, as he gently pulled one ear of the teasing, mischievous little orphan rabbit girl.

"Two pigs!" laughed Baby Bunty. "Two pigs make more noise than one."

"Yes, yes! So they do!" chuckled the rabbit gentleman. "That's an old riddle but a good

one. But now we must be ready. I see Mr. Whitewash standing behind the cottage, ready to rush in the back door when we make noises out in front to draw the people off the porch. All ready now!"

The hearts of the animal boys and girls beat faster than usual, for it was an exciting time. They were to help rescue poor Sammie. Uncle Wiggily stood on the shore where the animal folk, hidden behind trees and bushes, could see him.

"Attention!" whispered the rabbit. "Ready!" All eyes were turned toward him.

Suddenly Uncle Wiggily twinkled his pink nose, and at once there arose such a noise as you never heard before in all your life!

Curly and Floppy, the pigs, squealed at the tops of their voices, Jackie and Peetie Bow Wow barked, Charlie, the rooster boy, crowed, and his sister Arabella squawked and cackled. Lulu, Alice and Jimmie Wibblewobble, the ducks, quacked. Billie Wagtail, the goat, and his sister Nannie bleated. Buddy and Bright-eyes, the guinea pigs whistled, and even Jollie and Jillie Longtail, the mice, squeaked as did

Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy, who, I forgot to say, also went along to do her share.

And no sooner had these strange noises begun to echo through the forest than at once, up on the porch of the cottage, Neil and Joan leaped from their chairs, and even their father and mother arose.

"What in the world is that?" asked Mrs. Chadwick.

"Sounds like a dog fight," answered her husband.

"It is more than dogs," said Neil. "I hear pigs squealing."

"And I hear ducks quacking," added Joan. "It's down near the lake! Let's go see what it is!" she called to her brother.

But Neil did not wait for his sister to say this. Already he was running down the path, and Joan followed. Then Mr. and Mrs. Chadwick, as the strange noises continued, also walked down the path toward the water.

"It's working out just as I thought it would," whispered Uncle Wiggily to Nurse Jane, for he could see what was happening. "The people are leaving the front of the cottage. Now is the

time for Mr. Whitewash to go in the back door and rescue Sammie. I hope he does it right."

"You can trust Mr. Whitewash," said Nurse Jane, and she was correct.

The polar bear gentleman, from his hiding place behind a tree, had heard the barks, squeals and quacks, and he had seen the boy and girl rush down the path, followed by their father and mother.

"Now is my chance!" growled Mr. Whitewash to himself. "I'll go in the back way and out on the front porch and I'll get poor Sammie out of his cage, or else smash the cage with my big paw and set him free!"

Waiting a moment to give the Chadwick family a chance to get a little farther away, Mr. Whitewash left his sheltering tree and began shuffling toward the cottage. Though he was big and heavy his feet were so thickly padded that he walked very softly. He walked upright, on his back legs, almost as you and I do.

Into the kitchen door of the cottage, which he found open, walked Mr. Whitewash. He did not know much about the houses of human folk, but he could see that this was a nice one

and neatly kept. Making his way past the stove, on which was cooking something that smelled very good, Mr. Whitewash went into the dining room.

Looking quickly around, the polar bear gentleman did not see anything like a wooden cage with a rabbit in, and on he shuffled. Through the living room he went out on the porch. And there, in a corner, on a bench, was what he was seeking.

In a strong wooden cage was Sammie the prisoner rabbit boy. Sammie was much excited, for he had also heard the noises made by Uncle Wiggily and his friends, and Sammie wondered what it was all about. He was leaping from side to side of his cage, forgetting the carrots which Neil and Joan had, a little while before, put in for him to eat.

And then Sammie caught sight of Mr. Whitewash. As the big, white polar bear shuffled across the porch toward the cage in which Sammie was locked, the rabbit boy cried in animal language:

“Oh, Mr. Whitewash, please help me out! Please rescue me!”



"Wuff!" growled
Mr. Whitewash,
in surprise.

"That is just what I have come for, Sammie, my boy!" growled Mr. Whitewash. "I'll save you!"

The polar bear saw that it would take too long for him to claw open the door of the box so he gathered the cage up in his strong paws—cage, Sammie, carrots and all—and turned to hurry away, out the back door again.

"I'll break open the cage and let you out as soon as I get to a safe place in the woods—where Uncle Wiggily and the others are," said Mr. Whitewash to Sammie.

And then, just as the polar bear, holding the rabbit boy in the cage, started through the house again, he was met by a fat, colored woman. She was Euphemia, the negro cook of the Chadwick family. And now Euphemia stood right in the path of the polar bear who was trying to run away to save Sammie.

"Wuff!" growled Mr. Whitewash in surprise. "Wuff! Wuff!"

CHAPTER XXIV

THE BIG WIND

Now if Mr. Whitewash, the polar bear gentleman, was surprised to see Euphemia the colored cook there in the cottage, even more surprised was Euphemia. Mr. Whitewash had grunted: "Wuff!" But Euphemia gave a loud howl and shouted:

"Good lan' ob massy! De circus has bruk loose! Oh, good lan' ob massy!"

For a moment or two she stood there, looking at Mr. Whitewash, even as the polar bear stood looking at her, holding Sammie in the cage within his big paws. Then Mr. Whitewash, being very polite, said:

"Excuse me, black lady, but if you will kindly stand aside I will go out and take Sammie with me. I came to get him, that's all, and I will not harm you nor touch anything else in the cottage. Also you are mistaken in saying I am from a circus. I come from the North Pole and I am a friend of Uncle Wiggily!"

That is what Mr. Whitewash said, but as he spoke in animal talk Euphemia did not understand, though Mr. Whitewash, having been taught the trick by Uncle Wiggily, could easily understand what the colored cook said.

But if Euphemia could not understand what Mr. Whitewash said, she knew what he was trying to do—get past her, out of the house, so he could take Sammie in the cage with him. And, being very much afraid of the big white bear (though really she had no cause to be) the black cook was very willing to let him pass.

She gave another yell, louder than the first ones, and jumped to one side and toward the front door leading out on the porch.

“On yo’ way, white bear! On yo’ way!” cried Euphemia. “Ah’s got plenty othah troubles wifout yo’! On yo’ way!”

“Thank you;” answered Mr. Whitewash politely in his own language. “That is just what I want to do. And I’ll take Sammie with me on my way!”

Making a polite bow to Euphemia, even as Uncle Wiggily might have done, the polar bear shuffled toward the back door.

"Do you think we'll get away? Is it all right?" anxiously asked Sammie from within the cage.

"Yes, it's all right—don't worry," answered Mr. Whitewash. "Uncle Wiggily didn't know about a colored cook being in the cottage, I guess. But it's all right. She didn't bother us. She must have been out in the back yard, or in the woodshed, when I went through the kitchen. Then she came in after me and gave us a surprise."

"I guess you gave her a surprise, too," laughed Sammie—it was the first time he had laughed since being caught.

"Well, perhaps I did," admitted the polar bear gentleman. "Perhaps I did!"

"And I guess you frightened her a little, too," went on Sammie as Mr. Whitewash hurried out of the cottage, carrying the rabbit boy in the cage. "I can hear her yelling yet."

Indeed the voice of Euphemia could be heard echoing noisily through the woods.

"Well, I didn't mean to scare her," said Mr. Whitewash, "but it could not be helped. I came to rescue you and I did."

"And I'm glad of it!" said Sammie.

Mr. Whitewash hurried along the path that led to the grassy glade around which Uncle Wiggily's friends were camped.

Meanwhile, down on the shore, in front of the cottage, Uncle Wiggily and the others were keeping up their noises. But they were ready to cease for, from the top of a stump, the rabbit gentleman had caught sight of Mr. Whitewash going out the back door carrying something.

"You may stop shouting now, children," said Mr. Longears. "I think Sammie has been safely rescued."

By this time Neil and Joan, running faster than their father and mother, had come close to the shore of the lake. The nearer they went to the water the louder were the many strange noises. And then Neil cried:

"Oh, I see two little dogs, and they have trousers on and jackets and even caps—just like real boys! Oh, Joan, did you ever hear of such a thing!"

"I see a rabbit girl wearing a red dress!" cried Joan.

It was Susie Littletail you know.

“And I see some ducks all dressed up, and a goat boy with a blue necktie—Oh, Neil! What do you s’pose has happened?” cried Joan. “Is Sugar Island fairyland, to have so many animals dressed up like this?”

“It’s either that or else a circus has broken loose!” shouted Neil. “Oh, look!” he went on, pointing through the trees. “There’s an old rabbit gentleman with a tall silk hat and a red, white and blue crutch, though he doesn’t seem to use it much!”

This, as you have guessed, was Uncle Wiggily himself. Now and then he felt a twinge of rheumatism pain, so he carried, at times, a red, white and blue crutch which Nurse Jane had gnawed for him out of a cornstalk.

“Oh, this is wonderful!” cried Joan. “Look, there’s a rooster with a pair of pink trousers!”

“And I see a couple of frogs in green suits!” said Neil.

The children were now jumping up and down in their excitement. They turned to see if their father and mother were coming, and ran to meet them.

“Oh, Mother!” gasped Joan. “Come—quick

—animals—all dressed up—like real children! Oh! Oh!”

“Two little pigs with red and blue sweaters on!” added Neil, as much out of breath as was his sister.

“Nonsense! What are you talking about?” said Mr. Chadwick. “Animals dressed up! Do you think this is a circus?”

“Oh, but certainly animals made those queer noises,” said his wife.

“Yes, a couple of stray dogs, maybe, and a lost cat. But pigs in sweaters—impossible!” laughed Mr. Chadwick. However, as we know, Curly and Floppy Twistytail, the piggie boys had red and blue sweaters, so it wasn’t at all impossible.

Uncle Wiggily, who had jumped down off the stump, had seen the boy and girl and their father and mother coming and the rabbit gentleman knew, if he and his friends were seen in the clothes they wore, that they would at once be chased.

“And they may catch some of us, as Sammie was caught,” said Mr. Longears to Nurse Jane. “There is no need to stay here any

longer. We have played the trick we came here to play. Sammie has been rescued by Mr. Whitewash. We'll go back to the grassy glade and meet him and Sammie. Scatter, my dears! Scatter!"

At this command the rabbits, the ducks, the puppy dogs, the cats, the chickens, guinea pigs, goats and all the other animal boys and girls crouched down and scurried away—back of trees, behind rocks, through burrows in the earth, under bushes and bramble piles rushed the animals until, a few seconds after Neil and Joan had seen them, not one was in sight. By the time Mr. and Mrs. Chadwick reached the shore, Uncle Wiggily and his friends were far away.

"Oh! Oh!" gasped Joan, rubbing her eyes. "Did—did you see them, Neil, or was it all a dream?"

"It wasn't a dream," answered her brother. "But they're gone—and I don't know where!" and he, too, rubbed his eyes.

"What's all this talk about seeing dressed-up animals?" asked Mr. Chadwick as he stood beside his children.

"Really, Daddy, we saw them," said Joan. "A little rabbit girl in a red dress."

"And two pigs in sweaters," added Neil.

"What do you suppose it could have been?" asked Mrs. Chadwick in a low voice of her husband, for the children spoke too earnestly to admit of a mistake.

"Maybe some man with a lot of trained animals is on this island, Daddy," suggested Joan.

"It was a sort of day dream, I guess!" laughed her father.

But just then Euphemia came waddling down the path from the cottage crying out:

"Oh, good lan' ob massy! Good lan' ob massy! A great, big white bear gen'man—all dressed up—wif pants an' a vest! Big white bear gen'man came in an' took de cage wif de rabbit in! Oh, good lan' ob massy!"

"Euphemia, be quiet!" commanded Mrs. Chadwick. "Don't shout so! What's all this nonsense about a bear gentleman in a vest and trousers, Euphemia?"

"No nonsense a-tall, Miss Chadwick," answered the colored cook. "It's de truff! Dat big, towerin' white bear gen'man comed in de

back do'. He picked up de cage wif de chillun's pet rabbit in an' held it in his paws. Den he started out an' he met me. He went 'wuff! wuff!' laik, den he made me a bow, jes' as p'lite as yo' please, an' out he went! Oh, good lan' ob massy! He look so funny wif his vest an' trousers Ah done wanted t' laff but Ah didn't dare! Oh, good lan' ob massy!"

"Euphemia, be quiet!" said Mr. Chadwick. "You are as bad as the children, talking about animals with clothes on. It's all nonsense!"

"No, Massa Chadwick, 't isn't no nonsense," said the colored cook, more quiet, now. "Ef yo' all doan't believe me jes' go up to de cottage an' yo'll see de rabbit's cage gone! Jes' go look!"

With shouts of surprise at this new and strange news, Joan and Neil turned about and raced toward the cottage. Mr. and Mrs. Chadwick looked at each other.

"What do you think it means?" asked the lady of her husband in a low voice. "Do you know—I feel—I feel just a little—afraid!" and she glanced nervously over her shoulder.

"Nonsense!" laughed Mr. Chadwick. "The

children might have seen some squirrels and rabbits in the woods—dogs, too, from the howling, I should say. But with clothes on—nonsense!”

“But what about Euphemia seeing a polar bear with a vest and trousers?”

“She was asleep and dreamed it.”

“But if the rabbit and cage are gone?” asked his wife.

“Nonsense!” exclaimed Mr. Chadwick. That seemed to be a favorite word with him. “Nonsense! The cage with the rabbit in will be on the bench on the porch, just where it was when we ran down to see what the noise was about.”

But Joan and Neil came running down the path again.

“My rabbit is gone!” exclaimed the boy.

“And the cage, too,” added Joan.

Mrs. Chadwick looked at her husband in a queer way. He tried to say “Nonsense!” but the word seemed to stick in his throat.

By this time Mr. Whitewash, carrying Sammie in the cage, had reached the grassy glade, and the polar bear gentleman had not been there very long, with the rescued prisoner, be-

fore Uncle Wiggily and the others hurried to the meeting place.

"Oh, Sammie, how glad I am to see you!" cried his sister.

"My poor little rabbit boy!" murmured his mother, her face close to the cage. "What a terrible time you have had, and we never knew a thing about it!"

"I wondered why nobody came to get me out," said Sammie. "But I'm all right now, and I'll never run off by myself without my clothes on any more. Did you bring my jacket and trousers, mother?" he asked.

"Why, no, I never thought a thing about them!" said Mrs. Littletail. "Oh, dear!"

"Never mind!" growled Mr. Whitewash. "He can borrow clothes from some of the other boys. But first let me get him out of the cage. Stand aside, everybody!"

At first Mr. Whitewash thought he would have to smash the cage, which he could easily have done with one blow of his big paw. But this might have hurt Sammie who was inside. So the polar bear gentleman looked at the door

of the cage and saw that it was fastened with a sort of lock, or catch.

"If that could be unlocked Sammie could get out more easily," said Mr. Whitewash.

"Let me open it!" chattered Jacko Kinkytail, the monkey. And, being very clever at such tricks, Jacko soon had the door of the cage unfastened, and Sammie could hop out—free at last and in no danger of being caught again.

"Oh, how glad I am!" he cried.

"We are all glad!" laughed Uncle Wiggily. "Come, Nurse Jane, we must get up another party to celebrate the rescue of Sammie. And a jolly party it will be!"

But, all of a sudden, the trees and bushes began to sway and bend, tossing this way and that.

"There's going to be a big wind!" said Nurse Jane. "I think a storm is coming up, Uncle Wiggily. We had better go back to the main land. You have been camping on Sugar Island long enough. Better take the children back home!"

Harder and harder blew the wind. It

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whistled through the trees, tearing off some leaves which at once began to play tag one with the other in the air. Out on the lake the waves began to rise.

"Yes, a storm is coming," said the rabbit gentleman. "It will be better to go to shore while we have time. I'll get the motor boat ready, and you collect the children, Nurse Jane. Mr. and Mrs. Littletail and Mr. Whitewash will help you. We must hurry! The wind is getting stronger every moment."

"But what about me?" cried Sammie. "I don't want to leave Sugar Island without my jacket and trousers!"

"I'll find some clothes for you," offered Nurse Jane.

She was scurrying around, trying to get all the children in one place. Uncle Wiggily was making his motor boat ready for the trip back home and the wind was howling and blowing when, all of a sudden, Mr. Whitewash pointed up in the air and growled:

"Look! Look! See what is coming!"

CHAPTER XXV

HAPPY DAYS AND NIGHTS

SOME of the animal children, and even Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy and Mrs. Littletail, were a bit frightened by hearing the growls of the polar bear gentleman. They looked up to see what Mr. Whitewash was pointing at, thinking it might be a tree, blown down by the big wind.

But it wasn't a tree. And it wasn't a balloon.

Something, or, rather, two things, not very large, were sailing through the air. They seemed coming from the main land straight for Sugar Island.

"What in the world can they be?" asked Mrs. Littletail.

"Perhaps they are birds—Dickie and Nellie Chip Chip, the sparrows," said Nurse Jane, for though the sparrow children had been with Uncle Wiggily on Sugar Island for a time, they had flown back home. "Perhaps now they are coming back," went on the muskrat lady housekeeper.

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"No, those aren't birds," said Sammie, whose mother had pinned an old towel around him so he wouldn't catch cold when he got in Uncle Wiggily's motor boat. "Those aren't birds," said the rabbit boy.

"What are they, then?" asked his father.

"They are my clothes!" cried Sammie. "That's what they are—my jacket and trousers! They're being blown back to me, and just in time, too! Hurray!"

The wind howled louder than ever, as if laughing at its queer trick, and a moment later there was blown to the island, catching on a low thorn bush, the trousers and jacket of the little rabbit boy—the very same garments that had blown away from the swimming hole, landing up in a tree. There, on the tree, they had hung, ever since, until the big wind sprang up and tossed them loose again.

"Oh, I'm so glad!" cried Sammie, catching his clothes off the bush and quickly putting them on. "I thought I'd never find them again. Now I am ready to go home!" For though most rabbits do not wear clothing, Sammie did, and he had gotten so accustomed to them that

he seemed lost without them. The other animal children who lived near Uncle Wiggily felt the same way. And the button Sammie had, in his haste to undress, pulled off his jacket, was in the pocket where he had put it.

"Well, everything seems happening for the best," said Mr. Littletail. "We have found Sammie, Sammie has found his clothes and if we hurry we can get to the mainland before the storm grows too bad."

"Yes, we had better hurry," advised Nurse Jane, and then came a call from Uncle Wiggily down at the shore, where he was getting ready his motor boat.

"All aboard! All aboard!" shouted the rabbit gentleman, twinkling his pink nose. "Hurry, children. We have had happy days and nights on Sugar Island, but now we must leave it."

"Yes, we had better go," said Mr. White-wash. "There is no telling what that black lady might do—she screamed very loudly. I guess she didn't like to see me taking Sammie away. She may come after him."

"Yes, and so may that boy and girl!" spoke

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Sammie. "They were nice enough, and kind, and gave me plenty to eat, but I don't want to be shut up in a cage again for anybody!"

"I wouldn't, either," said Baby Bunty and, just for fun, she tickled Sammie on the back of his neck with a straw which made the little rabbit boy sneeze.

"Oh, you're catching cold!" cried his mother. "This may be a Jack Frost wind! We had better hurry away."

"It is too early for a Jack Frost wind," said Uncle Wiggily as the children and grown-up animals hurried down to the shore where his motor boat floated in a little cove. "But still we have had enough of camping on Sugar Island. All aboard!"

"I didn't have much fun camping here," said Sammie. "I was shut up in a cage all the while."

"We'll give you a party when we get on shore," promised Nurse Jane.

It did not take very long for the animal folk to crowd into the rabbit gentleman's motor boat made from a wash-tub. It was well that the tub was large, for the frog boys and the duck

children, who had swum over to the island, were now going back in the boat with the others, and this took up more room than before.

But at last they were all in, even Sammie with the clothes that had so strangely blown themselves back to him, and Mr. Longears steered out into the lake.

The wind was still blowing hard, and big waves were beginning to rise, but the bunny gentleman was a good sailor.

"We'll soon be safe on the main land," said Uncle Wiggily as he and Mr. Whitewash sang a jolly song. Nurse Jane and the others joined in the chorus.

Meanwhile, back in the cottage, Joan and Neil were running about trying to find their pet rabbit and his cage.

"He couldn't get away by himself and carry off the cage," said Neil. "He couldn't gnaw himself out for the cage was lined with tin. And he couldn't open the door since I put the new lock on."

"Well, he's gone and so is the cage," said Joan. "What happened?"

"Ah done tole you," said Euphemia, shaking

her head. "A white polar bear gen'man shuffled in an' took dat rabbit an' cage away. He wuffed at me, de bear did, but he was p'lite an' bowed. Dat's who took de rabbit away—a white bear gen'man wif pants an' a vest."

"That's all non——" began Mr. Chadwick. But his wife looked at him and asked:

"Then who did take the rabbit?"

"I'm sure I don't know, my dear," he answered. "I think it was all a dream. Maybe there never was a rabbit!"

"Oh, Daddy!" exclaimed Joan and Neil, and then Mr. Chadwick said:

"Well, we won't talk about it any more. There's going to be a storm and we must make everything snug. Come and help me fasten the boat, Neil."

And while he helped his father the little boy wondered and wondered and wondered, not only about what had happened his pet rabbit and cage, but about the queer animals he had seen, all dressed in garments of red, blue, green and pink.

"It couldn't have been a dream," murmured

Joan as she helped her mother close the cottage windows against the rising wind. "But what was it?"

And unless Joan and Neil read this book they will never know the secret of what really happened. But you and I know; don't we?

On and on over the lake, now made quite rough by the wind, sailed Uncle Wiggily and his friends. They were nearing the shore, on the edge of which sat the Fox, the Bob Cat and the Wolf.

"There comes Uncle Wiggily in his boat," snarled the Fox.

"Yes," snapped the Wolf, "I see him."

"I am going to more than see him—I am going to nibble him!" howled the Bob Cat. "Listen, my friends," he said to the other bad chaps. "The wind is blowing very hard. It will blow water in the eyes of Uncle Wiggily so he cannot see. And as soon as he lands from his boat we can jump on him and catch him."

"But he has a lot of friends with him," objected the Fox, who had sharp eyes. "I see

198 Uncle Wiggily on Sugar Island

many children in his tub—and Mr. and Mrs. Littletail the rabbits are also there. They must have been on a picnic.”

“I’m not afraid of a lot of animal children and even two grown rabbits!” boasted the Bob Cat. “I’m going down and catch Uncle Wiggily as soon as he lands.”

“Well, we’ll go along,” said the Fox and Wolf. “There are enough nibbles on his ears for all of us!”

Down to the shore rushed the three bad chaps, just as Uncle Wiggily’s boat grounded in the pebbles of the beach.

“We are waiting for you!” howled the Wolf.

“We want your ears!” snarled the Fox.

“And I’m going to have the most nibbles of anyone!” mewed the selfish Bob Cat.

But, all of a sudden, Mr. Whitewash, the big, strong polar bear gentleman, rose up from where he had been lying down on the bottom of the boat. Thus he had been hidden from sight.

“What did you say?” growled the white polar bear gentleman. “Whose ears are you going to nibble?”

Before the bad chaps could run away, or even answer, Mr. Whitewash leaped out of the boat and with his strong paws he hit and slapped the three unpleasant creatures so hard that they were knocked head over heels in somersaults and peppersaults.

"Don't you dare hurt my good friend Uncle Wiggily!" growled the polar bear.

"Oh, excuse us!" howled the Fox. "We didn't know you were in the party!"

And how the animal children laughed as they splashed water on the bad chaps, who picked themselves up and ran away; the Fox taking his tail, the Wolf taking his tail and the Bob Cat taking his silly little tail with him.

"All ashore!" ordered Uncle Wiggily, and out of his boat sprang the excursionists returning from Sugar Island. And no sooner had they all scattered to their different homes than it began to rain, for the big wind blew up a storm. But everyone was safe and dry, except the Wolf, the Fox and the Bob Cat, and they didn't deserve to be; did they?

But Uncle Wiggily and his friends were all happy, and such jolly tales as the animal chil-

dren had to tell their fathers and mothers about the camping on Sugar Island, and about the rescue of Sammie. That little rabbit boy was quite a hero among the other lads, I assure you.

And about a week later Uncle Wiggily and Nurse Jane arranged a party for him, since he had missed the one on the island. The party lasted two days and two nights, and there was a great deal of fun and many good things to eat.

Mr. Whitewash was also quite a hero, for he had rescued Sammie, and the polar bear gentleman did his queer dance while Uncle Wiggily sang the song about hitting the Fox on the nose with a head of cabbage.

But all things must come to an end, even jolly parties and books, and we have reached the end of this volume.

“What are you going to do next, Uncle Wiggily?” asked Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy as she saw the rabbit gentleman standing near the window of his hollow stump bungalow one day, twinkling his pink nose.

“Oh, I shall soon be off looking for more adventures,” he answered.

And when he goes I shall tell you about them in another book—that is if the front porch doesn't put on roller skates and try to ride to the movies with the jumping rope.

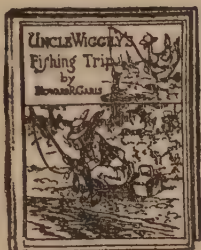
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